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Jerusalem

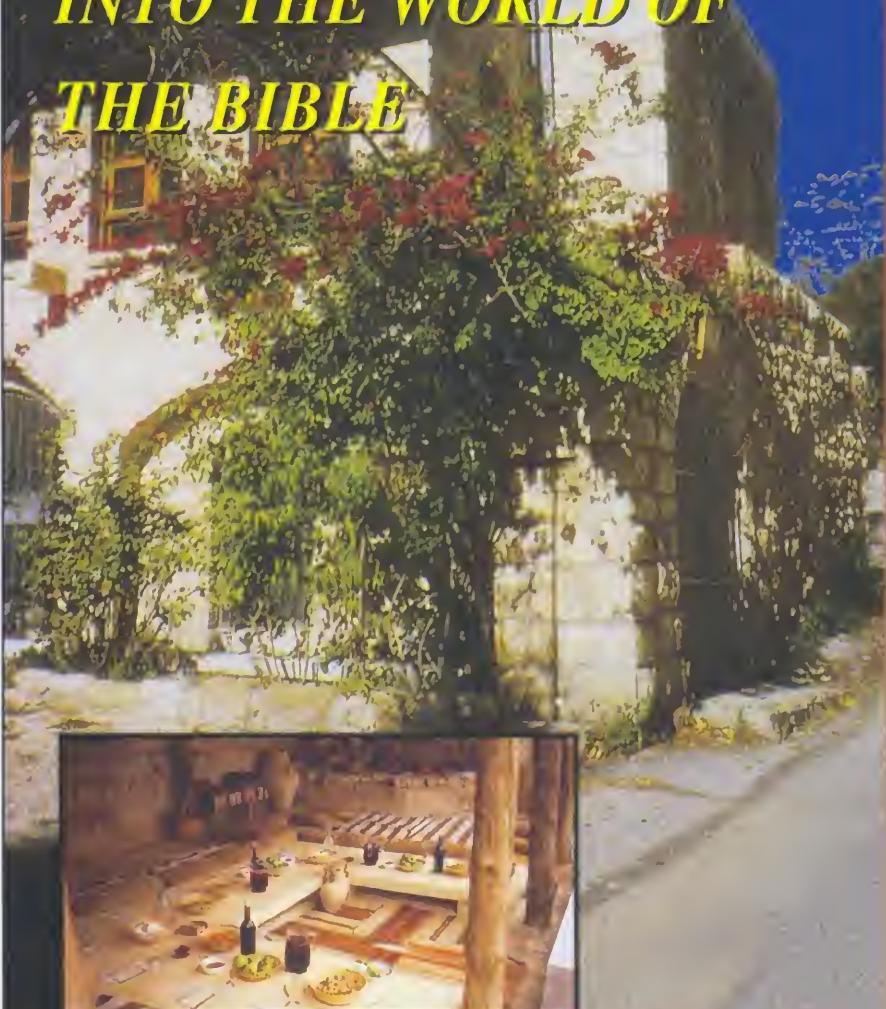
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EDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

This issue marks another step forward in our ongoing effort at making JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE more relevant. *JP* subscribers read magazines and books, listen to sermons and lectures, and consult translations of and commentaries on the Bible. Once in a while what they read or hear may seem questionable or altogether inaccurate. In the past, *JP* editors have steered away from commenting on such material, except in pronounced cases relating to scholastic conclusions about Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels.

In future issues of *JP*, readers can anticipate more of a readiness to address questionable claims and inaccuracies. For example, see in this issue my "New International Jesus" and "Medieval Jargon on First-century Lips." Never resorting to *ad hominem* arguments, critiques will be given in a professional, respectful and courteous manner. Whenever possible, we will encourage those with whom *JP* editors take issue to respond in writing. Note David Stern's

reply to my "Medieval Jargon."

Scholars welcome stimulating debate and constructive criticism. The debating and critiquing helps them sharpen arguments and strengthen conclusions. The exchange benefits all of us who place a premium on accuracy and objectivity. In such an environment cobwebs get swept clean from our thinking and our pet theories are shooed out the door.

Lastly, I encourage *JP*'s readers to express their opinions about the changes being made to the magazine's format, style and content. Feedback from you helps me know whether the changes are for the better or for the worse. Most importantly, I want *JP* to keep its focus on Jesus' teachings and retain its distinctive voice on issues related to that focus.

David Bivin

Editor

In Memory of Jeanette

1947-1999

Jeanette Pryor, wife of Jerusalem School member Dwight Pryor and co-founder of the Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, died on June 25, 1999 after a courageous bout with lung cancer. Attended by Dwight, her husband of thirty-three years, Jeanette spent her final weeks at home in Dayton, Ohio. The funeral took place on June 29th in Miami, Oklahoma, where both were raised. A memorial service was held in Dayton on July 9th. Jeanette was fifty-two years old at the time of her death.

To honor her memory, Poplar Bluff Internet has created a web page (www.JerusalemPerspective.com/JeanettePryor). The page includes lyrics to a song that Brian and Toni Becker composed as a tribute to Jeanette, as well as messages of condolence, highlights of her life, and an obituary. Members of the Jerusalem School and staff of JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE mourn Jeanette's passing. We will miss her very much. Blessed be the Faithful Judge!



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Jerusalem

PERSPECTIVE

Exploring the Jewish Background to Jesus' Life and Words

10



10 With All Due Respect...

Shmuel Safrai

The relationship between a sage and his disciple may be characterized both as that of a father to his son, and of a master to his servant. In effect, a disciple indentured himself to his teacher. Traveling with and attending to him, a disciple remained with his teacher twenty-four hours a day, three hundred sixty-five days a year. The etiquette governing the teacher-disciple relationship is a fascinating subject. In this article, Shmuel Safrai explores one aspect of that relationship: To what extent could an advanced disciple differ from the opinions of his teacher?

14 Design and Maintenance of First-century Ritual Immersion Baths

Ronny Reich

Archaeologists and other scholars have not written prolifically about ancient *mikvaot* (or ritual immersion baths). Nevertheless, ritual immersion in the first century A.D. constitutes an important element of the overall historical, social and religious background of the New Testament. Here, Ronny Reich explains in non-technical language the intricacies of the design and maintenance of ancient *mikvaot*.

20 The New International Jesus

David Bivin

The cliché "We are what we eat" contains a good bit of truth. Metaphorically, one could extend its application to education: "We are what we learn." This is particularly true for Bible translators. For example, a Protestant translator may render a biblical passage differently from a Catholic translator. Although variations are to be expected, there are boundaries. In their handling of what language Jesus and Paul spoke and the ritual tassels that Jesus wore, translators of the *New International Version* have crossed over from the acceptable to the intolerable.

25 Parables of Ill Repute

David Flusser

In rabbinic parables God could be portrayed as behaving in a morally ambiguous manner: he might be a cruel slave owner or a heartless judge. In a few Lukan parables, Jesus also portrayed God as behaving scandalously. Often unsettling for modern readers, such portrayals added humorous elements to the plot and heightened the dramatic effect.



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JP Editors

In ancient Roman society, the taking of revenge on an enemy was considered a commendable deed. Jesus, however, said, "Love your enemies." Was Jesus primarily addressing Roman attitudes about love and hate? Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which once belonged to the Jewish sectarians at Qumran, scholars have been able to answer this question with remarkable precision: Jesus was responding to the Jewish sectarians' doctrine of love for those within the community and of disdain for those outside of it.

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32 Medieval Jargon on First-century Lips

David Bivin

Remez (Hebrew for "hint, allusion"), one of four modes of kabbalistic scriptural interpretation, collectively referred to as *Pardes* (the Garden [of Torah]), is bandied about today by some Christian teachers. They suggest that the *Pardes* system of interpretation circulated in the time of Jesus. Transporting this thirteenth-century interpretive system into the first century misrepresents the language of the sages and constitutes a rather glaring anachronism.

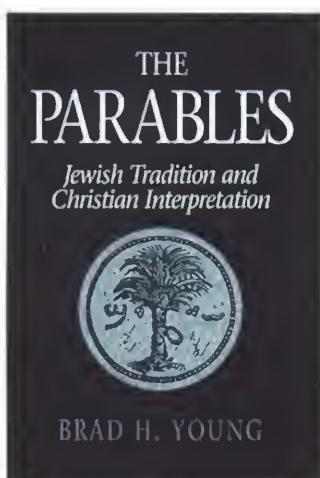
COLUMNS

8 Following Jesus: Reflections on the Lord's Life and Teachings: Learning Is for Life

Dwight A. Pryor

Before handing over the leadership to Joshua, Moses cautioned the people of Israel. He told them that the words he had spoken were not idle, but that they were the life of the people (Deut. 32:47). Therefore, in their teachings, the rabbis emphasized that the Torah contained life.

DEPARTMENTS



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COVER PHOTO: Rock-hewn steps ascend from a *mikveh* that was excavated in 1968 near the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount. The low partition built into the *mikveh*'s stairs divided the staircase into two lanes — one for ritually unclean persons to enter, and the other, for ritually clean persons to exit after having immersed themselves. *Photo: David Bivin.*

■ **NIV Masks Church's Jewish Heritage**

We need to alert Christians to the inadequacies of translations that do not accurately render the text, either out of tradition or out of an attempt to mask the church's Jewish heritage. I can think of no more obvious example than the *NIV*'s rendering of "kraspedon...himation" as "tassels of their prayer shawls" in reference to Jews and hypocrisy, while rendering the exact same phrase as "the hem of his garment" in reference to Jesus.

Dr. John Garr, Executive Director
Restoration Foundation
Atlanta
Georgia
U.S.A.

I wholeheartedly agree, and in response to your letter I have written an article for this issue: "The New International Jesus." Note, however, that the Greek text does not read "kraspedon...himation" in both Matthew 23:5 and Matthew 9:20, but rather, ta kraspeda (the tassels) in Matthew 23:5 and tou kraspedou tou himatiou autou (the tassel of his tunic) in Matthew 9:20 – DB

■ **Pastors Get Help from JP**

I have read thoroughly every issue of the *JP* – over and over again – since its inception. Each has been scholarly, yet lighthearted in content. I especially appreciate that there is something for everyone, including good little "snippets" for folks without much technical background.

I enjoy the responses from Jerusalem School scholars like Randall Buth to readers' letters. I, however, agree somewhat with

David Pennant where he stated, "I would be happier if the language used employed phrases like 'It seems possible that,' or 'One wonders whether,' and was generally less certain [concerning supposed sources]" (*JP* 55 [Apr.-Jun. 1999], 7).

I would like to see additional articles on Bible software programs like BibleWorks, which is my favorite. By the way, your web site is one of the best. I tell everyone whom I know to visit the site, and our church web page even has a link to it.

Pastor Garry Oliver
Grace Baptist Church
Spokane
Washington
U.S.A.

I have been reading JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE since January of 1990. In fact, Dr. Robert Lindsey was to have visited the church I pastor about a year before his death [May 31, 1995], but had to cancel his visit because of ill health. Dr. Lindsey was a friend of my major professor, the late Dale Moody.

Please know that I am one pastor whose ministry has been greatly enriched by JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE and the Jerusalem School. Keep up the good work.

Bill Blackburn, Ph.D.
Trinity Baptist Church
Kerrville
Texas
U.S.A.

■ **A Divine Messiah?**

Do you know of any exhaustive scholarly works that explain what various sects

of Judaism thought about who the Messiah would be, and did any believe that he would be deity (YHWH)?

David Garcia
(Letter received via email)

As usual, the best place to begin is the Encyclopaedia Judaica's entry on the subject ("Messiah," Vol. 11, pp. 1407–1427). There is a bibliography, too, at the end of the entry. Regarding the belief that the Messiah would be deity, Peter, apparently, believed that Jesus was of a divine nature. According to Robert Lindsey, that is a possible understanding of Peter's confession, "The Messiah (of) God" (i.e., "The divine Messiah") in Luke 9:20 (see Lindsey's Jesus Rabbi & Lord, pp. 122–124). Of course, throughout the centuries of the Common Era, Christians have maintained that Jesus and God are one – God incarnate who dwelt among people – but to prove this from the words of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels is a challenging task. – DB

JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE
welcomes letters, faxes and email
messages to the Editor. We will use
this column to share as many of our
readers' comments, queries and
requests as possible.

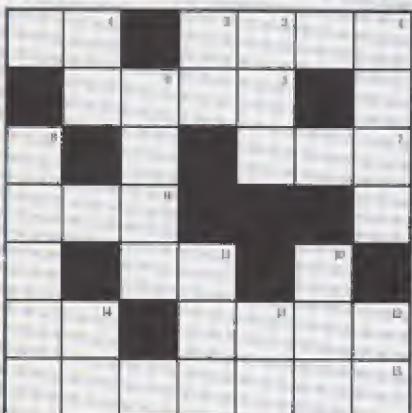
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for clarity or space.

JP's Hebrew Crossword

In line with JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE's efforts to foster interest in the Hebrew language, we present to our readers "JP's Hebrew Crossword," a crossword puzzle geared toward those readers who have mastered the Hebrew alphabet and acquired sufficient skill in the language to consult a Hebrew-to-English dictionary. Designed to be fun, "JP's Hebrew Crossword" serves as an effective and enjoyable learning tool. We recommend using a modern Hebrew dictionary, biblical Hebrew lexicon, Hebrew Bible and Bible concordance. Subscribers who complete the crossword puzzle and send us its correct solution will be eligible for a special prize.



ACROSS

1. *Bereishit* is the first, *Noach* the second and *Zot Haberachah* the last.
4. While in the wilderness, the Israelites ground it, crushed it and cooked it. The rabbis even suggested that the Israelite women made perfume from it.
5. Asaph guarded one of these for King Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:8).
7. Jesus gave thanks for it, Paul recommended a little of it, and some preach against it.
9. In Genesis 31:3 God commanded Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and relatives." The verb appears in this verse as an imperative. Enter the verb as it appears in the verse.
11. When an ancient Israelite chanced upon one, he or she was permitted to take only the young (Deut. 22:6-7).
12. This phrase, consisting of a preposition prefixed to a proper noun, appears in a number of introductions to the Psalms.
14. The Hebrew word for "what."
15. Not a safe city for prophets.

"JP's Hebrew Crossword" is a regular feature of JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE. Send the puzzle's correct solution by airmail to: Editor, JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE, P.O. Box 31820, 91317 Jerusalem, Israel. Or send your solution by fax: 972-2-5235566. You may win a special prize. The name of each JP subscriber who sends in the correct solution will be published in the next issue of the magazine and included in a lottery. The winner of the lottery will receive a copy of *Holyland 2000: The Biblical Weekly Planner*, the Jerusalem School's weekly dated planning calendar for the year 2000 (see ad on inside back cover). The lottery winner will be selected five weeks after this issue has been mailed. Accordingly, contestants will have about three weeks to solve the puzzle and send in the correct solution.

DOWN

1. The repeated key word in the phrase describing how God spoke to Moses (Deut. 34:10).
2. Numbered among the four small but exceedingly wise creatures on the earth, this distant cousin of the elephant builds his home in the rocks.
3. God instructed Abraham to offer up his son on one of these in the land of Moriah.
4. King Xerxes imposed this upon the subject peoples of his empire (Esth. 10:1).
6. In modern Hebrew, the verb *kataf* means "he wrote," and the noun *kataf* means "typist." The verb *derash* means "he preached, taught the Bible," and the noun ____ means "preacher, teacher."
8. When God gave him his new name, he gained five; whereas, when God gave his wife her new name, she lost five. (Hint: the numerical value of the letter *aleph* is 5, and of the letter *yod*, 10.) What was his new name?
10. Meaning "order" or "arrangement," this word is the Hebrew term for the Passover meal.
11. JP55 included, under the banner "Cats in Jerusalem," a piece entitled "Noun Chains in the Gospels." Exodus 3:5 contains a noun chain, a Hebrew grammatical structure known as "construct state." As usual in the construct state, the second noun functions here as an adjective modifying the first noun. Enter the second noun, which is functioning like an adjective modifying the noun "ground."
12. This preposition plus pronominal suffix can mean "to me" or "for me" (Song 2:16).
13. This noun means "hook" or "peg." Only appearing in Exodus 26, 27, 36 and 38, and only as a plural noun, this word is used for describing the hardware belonging to the tabernacle in the wilderness. What is the singular form of this noun?
14. The Hebrew word for "who."

JP Subscribers Solve Hebrew Crossword

I was elated by the response to our first Hebrew Crossword, which appeared in the last issue. Fifteen subscribers sent in solutions for the puzzle!

Sheila Gyllenberg, Ariel, Israel — Lucy Lincoln, Bath, Maine, U.S.A. — Gary Lee Alley, Sr., Brandon, Florida, U.S.A. — Samuel Arnet, Berne, Switzerland — Gretchen Gallup, Northbrook, Illinois, U.S.A. — Hannele Sorensen, Charlotte, North Carolina, U.S.A. — Roy Thurley, Llandudno, Wales, U.K. — Hermien Lambrechts, Brooklyn, South Africa — Rachel S. Kamm, Reese, Michigan, U.S.A. — Geneese Kimbrell, Longview, Texas, U.S.A. — Judy Beyerlein, Sterling Heights, Michigan, U.S.A. — Brian Ford, Palmerston North, New Zealand — Barbara Chambers, Jerusalem, Israel — Joseph J. Cairns, Jr., Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, U.S.A. — James W. Fox, Houston, Texas, U.S.A.

Twelve subscribers submitted correct solutions to the crossword, and three had only a minor mistake — one wrong letter. Joseph J. Cairns, Jr., won the drawing. He will receive an autographed copy of Professor David Flusser's book, *Judaic Mazal tov!* (Our congratulations to the winner!)

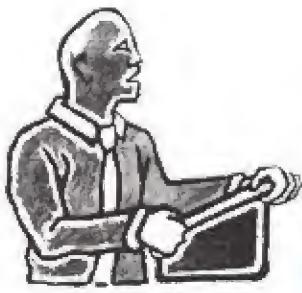
Here is the JP55 crossword's correct solution:



Please note that in order to solve JP's Hebrew crossword puzzles, a subscriber needs to know how to read and write the Hebrew alphabet and to consult a Hebrew-to-English dictionary. Most of this knowledge can be acquired by completing *Aleph-Bet: A Beginner's Introduction to Reading and Writing Hebrew*, a ten-hour video course. More advanced Hebrew students may find the *Fluent Biblical and Modern Hebrew* course helpful. For more information about these and other Hebrew courses, visit *Jerusalem Perspective's* online bookstore: <http://www.jerusalemperspective.com>.

One particularly alert contestant wrote us the following note: "The last letter of 2 Across, a *tzaade*, forms the first letter of 3 Down. The *tzaade* is one of five Hebrew letters that have a different form when they appear as the last letter of a word. How does this work in a crossword context, given that this character has a final form?"

The question is one that we asked ourselves. Before creating the first "JP Hebrew Crossword," we stood as novices on the threshold of crossword design. Fortunately, however, the learning curve was steep. Our design techniques have become more sophisticated. As proof, in this issue we offer to our readers a new, improved crossword puzzle. — Joseph Frankovic



Learning Is for Life

by Dwight A. Pryor

Drawing from personal insights based upon his own spiritual journey and study of the Scriptures, a respected Christian preacher and teacher offers some reflections on the life of Jesus for Christian readers of JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE.

Are any words of Jesus better known than these: "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32, KJV)? This ringing declaration holds a prominent place in Western thought, and has exerted a powerful and even prophetic influence upon the American way of life in the last two centuries. Incised on our hallowed U.S. Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C., it expresses the best of our ambitions and ideals as a nation "under God."

The view that "The truth shall set you free" seems entirely consistent with our Western disposition and Greco-Roman heritage. After all, did not the Greeks esteem truth above all else? "The True, the Good, the Beautiful" – were not these the triune object of Greek philosophy's holy quest? But consider this: Jesus was not Socrates. He was a Jewish sage, not a Greek philosopher. His world, his values, his quest were intrinsically and unequivocally Hebraic, not Hellenistic, in character.

In Jesus' world, the *pursuit* of truth was not the highest ambition so much as the *doing* of truth. Truth was a given – in the self-disclosure of the Holy One who is

ever "Faithful and True." The chief task of the Jewish sage, therefore, was to rightly interpret this Divine revelation, preserved in Holy Scripture, and to teach his disciples, by word and example, how to obey the Divine will. Thereby would he bring them into the fullness of life and liberty intended by God.

Shortly before his death, the exemplar Moses reminded Israel that the Torah's guidance and instruction "are not just idle words for you – they are your life. By them you will live..." (Deut. 32:47, NIV). The ancient rabbinic adage, "The more Torah, the more life," emphasized this truth. To study God's word so as to obey it was the greatest joy and chief duty of any son of Abraham. Study was supremely important because Torah (Teaching) was supernaturally given. The process of diligently engaging and wrestling with the sacred text enlivened and sanctified all of one's existence. Learning was for life and life was for learning.

Because the Hebrew Scriptures were considered "God-breathed," study was seen as a high form of worship that honored God (who delights in obedience more than sacrifices) and that prospered and strengthened the student (cf. Josh.

1:8). *Talmud Torah*, the study of God's word, formed the distinctive religious basis of all Jewish life. Study-leading-to-obedience was an act of devotion that engaged the whole person – heart, soul, mind and might – not just the intellect. Unlike the Greeks, who studied to comprehend, the Hebrews studied to revere, as A. J. Heschel has noted. Jewish learning was more than a holy pursuit, it was a pursuit of the Holy.

Within this Jewish frame of reference, the famous saying of Jesus, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," takes on quite a different emphasis. This is evident in its fuller context: "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (Jn. 8:31–32, NRSV). Note that this is not an abstract precept. It is a conditional promise and a covenantal invitation. In other words, the way to the truth that fully liberates, saves and enlivens is found on the path of discipleship to Jesus! To "know the truth" is to be in an intimate, master-disciple relationship with the one who can liberate us into God's life.

This commitment to "walk after" Jesus and to learn of him is so important that it

must take precedence even over our most cherished relationships with "father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, even life itself" (Lk. 14:26, NRSV). Yes, discipleship is costly, but the rewards are priceless — righteousness, peace and joy in the Kingdom of God. Non-discipleship to Jesus is costlier still: we miss out on the fullness of God's intended life.

Shortly before his ascension, Jesus imparted to his disciples a perpetual obligation. They now were to make disciples of him. Jesus commanded and empowered them to teach the nations all that he had taught them, so that the nations, too, might obey and be liberated. That perpetual obligation rests on those who follow Jesus today. If his "Great Commission" has become our "Great Omission," let us resolve

anew, individually and corporately, to give rightful precedence to God's word and the highest priority to being and making disciples after the likeness of Jesus.

As a start, I would suggest the following:

- Develop an appreciation, even a love, for the Bible of Jesus — *Torah*, *Nevi'im* (Prophets) and *Ketuvim* (Writings). Read, study and memorize the Hebrew Scriptures that inspired and instructed our Lord, and that Paul declared to be "God-breathed and profitable for teaching" (2 Tim. 3:16).

- As part of your on-going study of Scripture, read the weekly Torah portion on the schedule followed by the Jewish people around the world. In the course of every year, you will share in the adventure of hearing once again God's spoken

word through Moses, revelation that was so familiar and important to Jesus.

- Get yourself *haverim* (companions) in study. To follow Jesus is to be joined to his community of faith — to learn, to love and to serve one another in committed Christian relationships. By twos and threes the disciples gathered together to study his words. By twos and threes they went out to serve his Kingdom. Hebraic, biblical study flowers best, not in the soil of "private interpretation" or autonomous independence, but in the "garden of the Lord," in nurturing, covenantal interdependence.

Yeshua, the teacher-sage from Nazareth, embodied the best of the Jewish worldview regarding the significance and sanctity of learning. As his followers, may our lives of learning bring credit to our Lord and honor to our God. **JP**

Be a "Friend of the Jerusalem School"

The Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research, a consortium of Jewish and Christian scholars, was chartered in 1985 as an Israeli non-profit scientific and educational organization dedicated to understanding better the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke), and to rethinking the Synoptic Problem. Examining the Synoptic Gospels within the context of the languages, land and culture in which Jesus lived, this Jewish-Christian collaboration is unique and unprecedented historically. For the first time in history, Christian scholars fluent in Hebrew and living in Israel are collaborating with Jewish scholars to examine Jesus' sayings from a Jewish and Hebraic perspective. The results of this research confirm that Jesus was an organic part of the diverse social and religious landscape of Second Temple-period Judaism. He, like other Jewish sages of his time, taught in Hebrew and used specialized methods to teach foundational Jewish theological concepts such as God's abundant grace. Jesus' teaching was revolutionary in certain aspects, particularly in three areas: his radical interpretation of the biblical commandment of mutual love; his call for a new morality; his idea of the Kingdom of Heaven (David Flusser, *Jesus*, p. 81).

It is customary in Israel to call the supporters of a research organization or educational institution "Friends." For example, supporters of the Hebrew University are called "Friends of the Hebrew University." The Jerusalem School's supporters are called "Friends of the Jerusalem School." These Friends help finance the study of Jesus' words undertaken by scholars of the Jerusalem School. Their contributions aid in the exploration of Jesus' biography by encouraging research projects, publication of new discoveries, and the creation of educational outreach programs.

"Friends of the Jerusalem School" enjoy significant benefits: the satisfaction of supporting — through their membership dues — the dissemination of more accurate knowledge about Jesus' teaching; a beautiful certificate of membership suitable for framing; a free subscription to JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE (a \$48/E30 value); a free subscription to *Synoptic Gospels*, the School's semiannual journal (a \$49/E30 value); a 20% discount on JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE and *Synoptic Gospels* back issues*; a 10% discount on all Jerusalem School conference registration fees, and on tuition for all seminars and workshops conducted by David Birn, Randall Buth or Joseph Frankovic; a 10% discount on subscriptions to *Jerusalem Perspective Online*, which, among other things, provides the ability to search JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE back issues, and books written by Jerusalem School members, even books still in manuscript form*; a 10% discount on personalized JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE and Jerusalem School email accounts; periodic progress reports from the Jerusalem School's director.

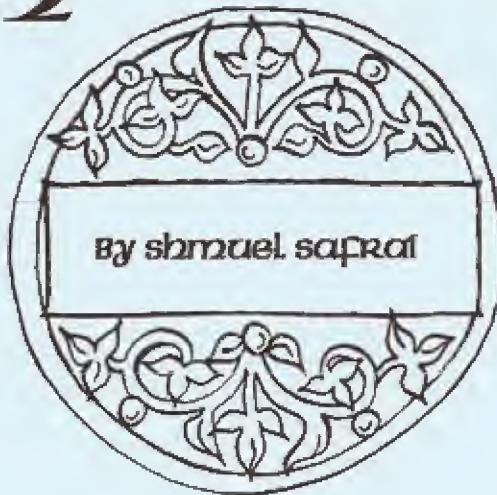
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With all due respect...



HILLEN TWENA



the teacher-disciple relationship stood at the forefront of rabbinic culture. Like two adjoining links in a strong chain, a teacher passed on to his students what he had learned from his teacher. To ensure, however, that this body of learning, otherwise known as

Oral Torah, never stagnated, a teacher also passed on his own innovations.

Sometimes a teacher's innovations departed from or even contradicted that which his teacher had taught. Rabbinic culture permitted such moments, but they were governed by a strong sense of etiquette. An innovator always showed the utmost

respect for his teacher. He could not correct his teacher in public on a mistaken point due to a lapse in his teacher's memory (Babylonian Talmud, Menahot 64b). Nor could he teach near the same place where, at the same time, his teacher was teaching (Leviticus Rabbah 20:6–7). He could, however, cite his teacher's opinion



on some point of halachic or aggadic exegesis, and mention his own opinion after it.

Mishnah, Eduyot 1:12–14 records, one after the other, four cases where the disciples of Hillel abandoned the opinion of their teacher and embraced the opinion of Shammai. One of the cases reads as follows:

A man who is half slave and half free [e.g., set free by one of his two owners] works one day for his master and one day for himself. This is the ruling of the School of Hillel. The School of Shammai said to them: You have done well

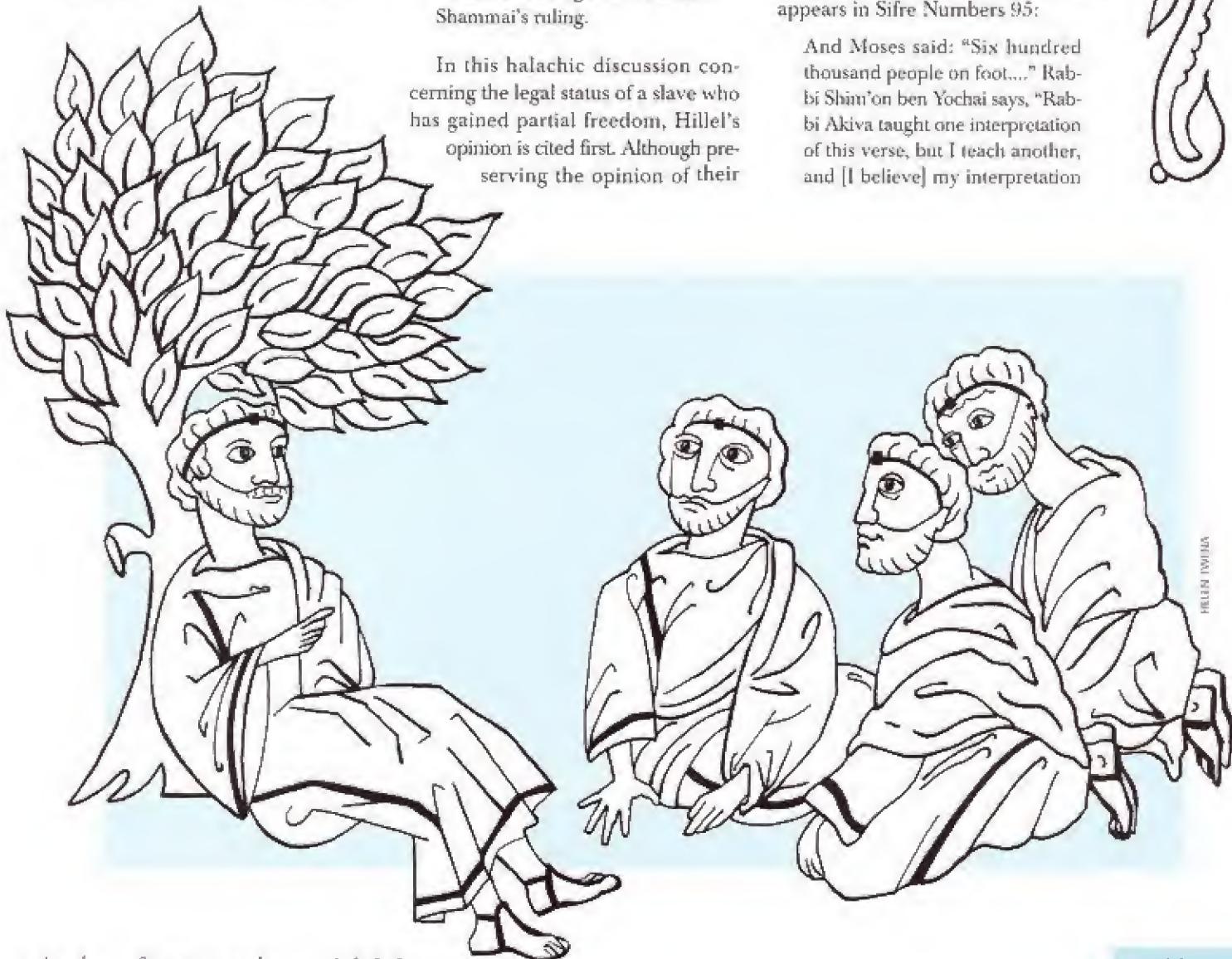
by the master, but not by the half-slave – he cannot marry a slave woman nor can he marry a free woman. Is he supposed to remain unmarried all his life? Was not the world created precisely for fruition and increase? For it is written: “He did not create it [the world] to be a waste; he formed it to be inhabited [Isa. 45:18].” Therefore, for the general good, the master of such a slave is to be forced to set him free, and the slave will give him a promissory note for half his value. The School of Hillel changed their opinion and began to teach according to the School of Shammai’s ruling.

In this halachic discussion concerning the legal status of a slave who has gained partial freedom, Hillel’s opinion is cited first. Although preserving the opinion of their

respected teacher, Hillel’s School, or in other words, his students, opted for Shammai’s opinion.

The most famous example of a student departing from the views of his teacher is that of Shim'on ben Yochai.* In Sifre Deuteronomy 31, four cases are mentioned, also one after the other, where Shim'on ben Yochai offered exegetical opinions differing from those of his great teacher, Akiva. The four cases involve Genesis 21:9, Numbers 11:22, Ezekiel 33:24 and Zechariah 8:19. Below, I will cite what Shim'on ben Yochai said about Akiva’s opinion on Numbers 11:22, as it appears in Sifre Numbers 95:

And Moses said: “Six hundred thousand people on foot....” Rabbi Shim'on ben Yochai says, “Rabbi Akiva taught one interpretation of this verse, but I teach another, and [I believe] my interpretation





is more suitable than that of my teacher. He interpreted [the verse in this way]...but I interpret [it in this way]...."

In accordance with rabbinic etiquette, Shim'on ben Yochai respectfully disagreed with his teacher. First introducing Akiva, Shim'on ben Yochai explained briefly and politely that he had found a more suitable explanation for the verse. He then cited Akiva's interpretation, and after it, he added his own.

Interestingly, Jesus' words in Matthew 5:27, 32, 34, 39 and 44 carry a similar ring to them. In a gentle and respectful way, he departed from prevailing interpretations of Exodus 20:14, Deuteronomy 24:1–4, Numbers 30:3, Exodus 21:24 and Leviticus 19:18 and offered his own

interpretations as alternatives. Jesus' words, preserved in Greek as *ego de lego* ("But I say..."), resemble Shim'on ben Yochai's words, preserved in Hebrew as *veani omer* ("But I say...").

A Jewish sage in antiquity, such as Jesus of Nazareth or Shim'on ben Yochai, belonged to a well-established and evergrowing tradition. On the one hand, a sage was obligated to show the utmost respect to his teacher, who had invested in him a trove of orally transmitted Jewish teachings; but on the other hand, he was expected to enrich further this ever increasing body of learning. Enriching the Oral Torah required transmitting and ensuring the preservation of what a sage had learned, while sometimes disagreeing with and adding to it. By doing so, he strengthened and kept vibrant the Jewish faith. Affirming the *old*, he infused it with the *new*. **JP**

illustrates the reverse trend: a teacher (Yehoshua, a younger contemporary of Jesus) encouraging his students to accept an innovation from another teacher (Eleazar ben Azariah). Note how the revered Yehoshua expected innovations and new insights to be brought forth every Sabbath in the house of study.

A story about Rabbi Yohanan ben Beroka and Rabbi Eleazar Hasama, who were going from Yavneh to Lod and on the way paid a visit to [their teacher] Rabbi Yehoshua in Peki'in. Rabbi Yehoshua said: "What innovation was put forward in the house of study today?" They said to him: "We are your pupils and we drink from your water [that is, 'All our learning we have acquired from you.' The drinking of water refers to Torah study]."⁷ He said to them: "It is not possible that no innovation was put forward in the house of study. Whose Sabbath was it [i.e., 'Who gave the lesson']?" They said to him: "Eleazar ben Azariah's." He said to them: "On what Scripture did he teach?" [Tosefta, Sotah 7:9]

⁷In rabbinic literature one story even





Page 11:

Sheltered from the relentless Mideastern sun by the branches of a tree, a sage sits with his students. In the quiet shade of vineyard watchtowers or under the roofed colonnades of bustling markets, sages taught their students in open-air "classrooms." The teacher and his students are wearing tefillin, both on their heads and upper left arms, although the arm tefillin, covered by the folds of their talliths (outer robes), are not visible. (Note that the Scripture capsules of the head tefillin are extremely small, no wider than a small postage stamp.) Ritual tassels hang freely from the talliths' corners. Typical of first-century Jewish preferences, their hair is short, and their beards are trimmed.

Opposite and below:

Rested after a night's sleep, Galilean villagers start their day with a Bible lesson, whereas the fishermen, who have worked their nets through the night, welcome the relaxing moment. The people have gathered at the water's edge to greet the men and see their catches. The fishermen are tired, but others in the audience are alert and attentive as the teacher speaks. Not standing, but sitting, he teaches from a boat. Although the teacher wears tefillin on his head and arm, the fishermen do not, since the tefillin were removed for work.



FELICE TIVONA

DESIGN & MAINTENANCE OF FIRST-CENTURY RITUAL IMMERSION BATHS

BY RONNY REICH

What we know about ritual immersion in the late Second Temple period derives mainly from archaeological digs, the Dead Sea Scrolls and rabbinic literature. The archaeological remains of *mikvaot* (ritual immersion pools; pronounced meek·vah·ote; singular: *mikveh*) and the Dead Sea Scrolls date precisely from this period; whereas, the data coming from rabbinic literature, primarily from the Mishnah and Sifra, have been preserved in texts compiled and edited 150 years after the destruction of the Second Temple. Despite the gap in time between the close of the Second Temple period in 70 C.E. and the completion of the Mishnah and Sifra at approximately 250 C.E., these early rabbinic texts contain information that dovetails remarkably with the archaeological record, and therefore, is relevant for studying ritual immersion in the late Second Temple period.

In the tractate *Mikvaot*, one of the tractates of the Mishnah, and in Parashah *Metsora* and Parashah *Shemini*, two sections of Sifra, the rabbis recorded highlights of their discussions resolving various problems concerning ritual immersion. From their discussions we learn five requirements for a ritually proper *mikveh*:

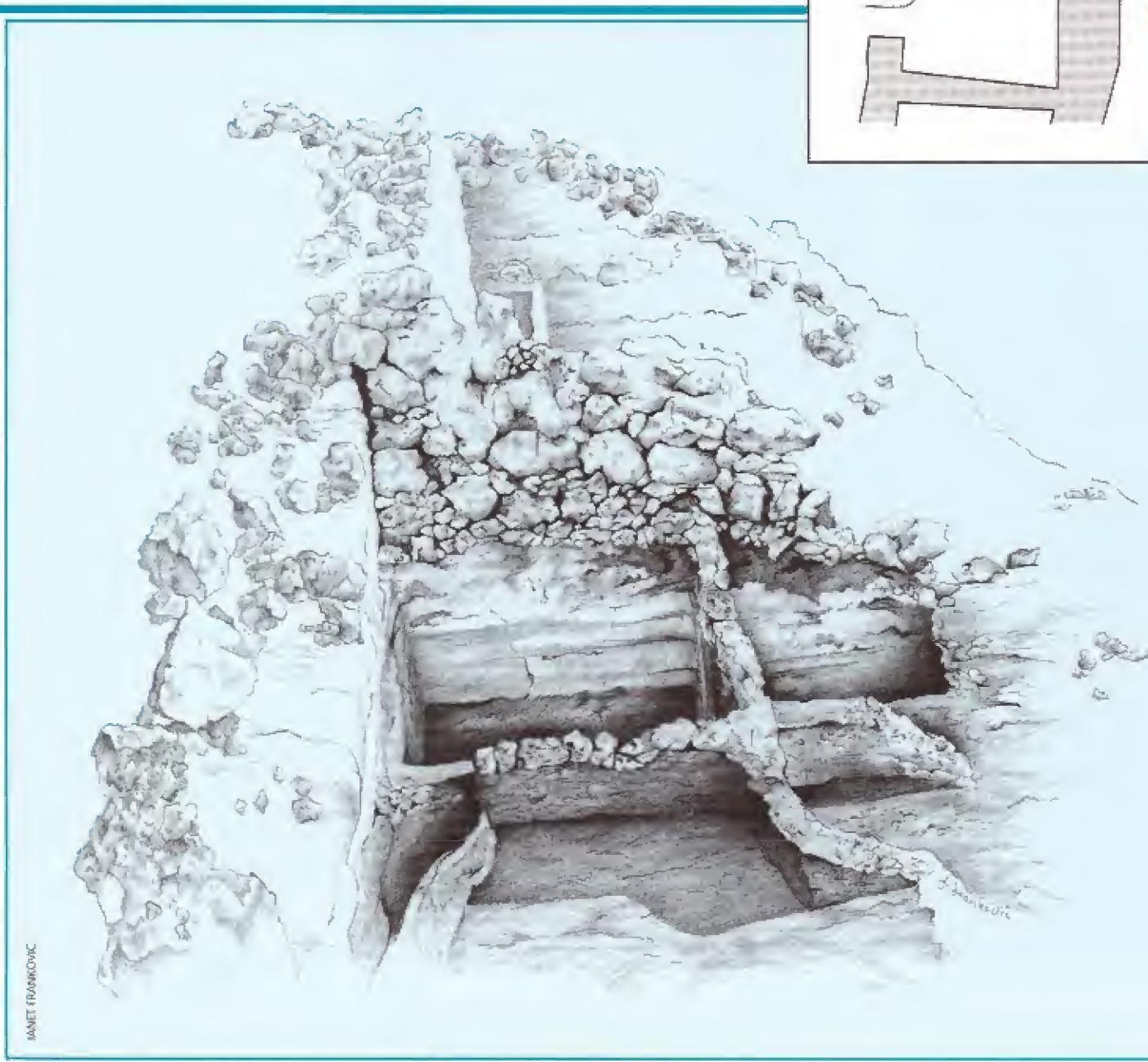
1. Water provided by God (in rabbinic parlance, "By the hands of Heaven"). Rain or spring water had to flow naturally, without direct human intervention, into a *mikveh*. Channels, gutters and ducts were allowed for directing into a *mikveh* the course of flowing or running water; however, water drawn by human hands and poured into a *mikveh* did not satisfy this requirement.

2. Built into the ground. A *mikveh* had to be built into the ground. This eliminated the possibility of a precast immersion chamber, or of an immersion chamber elevated above ground, for instance, a *mikveh* on the second floor of a building.

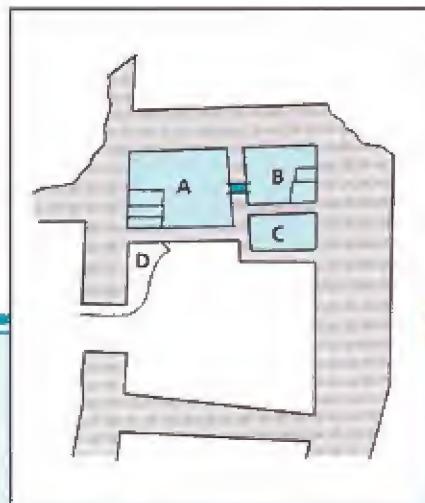
3. Dimensions of one cubit by one cubit to a height of three cubits (a cubit is about 46 cm.). A *mikveh* had to hold a volume of water with the following minimum dimensions: one square cubit with a depth of three cubits ($1 \times 1 \times 3$ cubits). Translated into architectural terms, this meant that the floor of a *mikveh* had a minimum area of one square cubit with plastered walls rising to

Below: Masada's southern mikveh (of the rain-fed, double-chambered design)

Right: Plan of the southern mikveh at Masada: **A.** Rainwater collection pool (dormant chamber); **B.** Active immersion chamber; **C** Pool for washing of hands and feet; **D.** Settling trough.



MANET FRANKOWICZ



JANE T FRANKOWICZ



A large *mikveh* with double entrance, part of the mid-first-century Tombs of the Kings burial complex in Jerusalem. The tomb complex probably should be identified with the magnificent burial place and funerary monument described by Josephus (*Antiq.* 20:95) that Helena, Queen of Adiabene, had made for herself and her family just north of the ancient city's Third Wall.

a height of at least three cubits (ca. 1.4 meters). A *mikveh* with these minimum dimensions held approximately forty *seals* (ca. 350 liters) of water.*

4. Water that is not seeping. The water inside a *mikveh* had to be stationary, or, in rabbinic terminology, not "crawling" (*zotHalim*). In other words, the walls of an immersion chamber had to be watertight. Leakage or seepage rendered a *mikveh* unfit for immersion.

5. Water with the appearance of water. The water in a *mikveh* had to look like water. Scattered surface debris, algae, or spots of mold on the plastered walls did not alter the water's appearance beyond recognition. If, however, a large pot of milk fell into a *mikveh*, and its water became clouded so that the appearance changed, the milky water would have to be removed and replaced with new water.

When these five requirements were satisfied, then there existed what the rabbis called *shi'ur mikveh* (measure of a *mikveh*), in other words, a *mikveh* whose water was ritually efficacious. Such a *mikveh* and its water could impart ritual purity to most individuals who were in a ritually impure state. Two exceptions were a person who had been suffering from an unnatural discharge of fluid from the body and someone who had come into contact with a corpse. Ritually impure utensils and vessels, excluding those made from clay (cf. Lev. 11:33), if immersed in a ritually efficacious *mikveh*, became pure. Such a *mikveh* could impart ritual purity to hand-drawn water, too. This last ritually efficacious function allowed for a way to circumvent certain restrictions imposed by requirement no. 1.

The Dead Sea Scrolls and Ritual Immersion

Over one hundred years ago, Solomon Schechter identified two incomplete medieval manuscripts of the Damascus Document in a *genizah* of the Ezra Synagogue in Cairo. In the middle of the twentieth century, much older fragments of

the Damascus Document were discovered in Caves 4, 5 and 6 at Qumran. In this ancient, pre-Christian text, we find the following remarks about ritual immersion:

No one shall immerse in dirty water or in an amount too shallow to cover oneself. Nor shall one purify oneself with water contained in a vessel. And as for the water of every rock-pool too shallow to cover a person, if someone who is unclean comes into contact with it, that person renders its water as unclean as vessel-drawn water. (Damascus Document 10.10–13)

Here the writer of the Damascus Document addressed concerns approaching those addressed more comprehensively in the later rabbinic literature. Prohibiting immersion in dirty water – exactly what nuance “dirty” carries here is not certain – parallels requirement no. 5. Designating the depth of water sufficient for a person to immerse parallels requirement no. 3. Prohibiting purification with water contained in a vessel parallels requirement no. 1. Rabbinic discussion also contains a faint echo of the stipulation about someone who is unclean touching a pool of insufficient area and with water of insufficient depth to cover oneself.

In the first century the sectarians living at Qumran expressly forbade immersing in dirty water, even if that water had flowed naturally into a pool without direct human intervention.^{**} The rabbis permitted immersing in a *mikveh* on condition that its water maintained the appearance of water. Nevertheless, regular maintenance for a *mikveh* must have been taken seriously whether or not a community’s halachah required clear, clean water. From a practical perspective, immersing in a *mikveh* with turbid water or a thick layer of sediment on its floor could not have been an attractive experience.

The Archaeological Record

In Hasmonean Jericho some Jewish residents enjoyed the benefit of private *mikvaot* whose water flowed from springs. Flowing spring water facilitated maintenance. To clean or repair a spring-fed *mikveh*, one simply had to keep the duct carrying the water from the spring plugged and to bail the water out of the immersion chamber. Once dry, the *mikveh* could be swept clean, repaired, and then refilled easily by unplugging the duct and replugging it once sufficient water had entered the chamber.

In Jerusalem, residents apparently employed a different strategy for filling and maintaining *mikvaot*. The one major spring within the city sits low on the eastern slopes of the City of David, below where the vast majority of homes were located in the first century. Accordingly, residents with private *mikvaot* depended on the annual winter rains to fill them. Gutters and channels funneled rainwater off of housetops and from open courtyards.

The sages perfected a principle that enabled owners of rain-fed *mikvaot* to replenish lost water due to evaporation and exiting bathers. They determined that whenever the physical dimensions of a *mikveh* and the properties of its water met the requirements for *sh’ut mikveh*, then its water purified upon contact any amount of ritually impure water, that is, hand-drawn water (Mishnah, Mikvaot 6:1). Their ruling carries an echo of what we already read in the Damascus Document: “And as for the water of every rock-pool too shallow to cover a person, if someone who is unclean comes into contact with it, that person renders its water as unclean as vessel-drawn water.” For the sectarians at Qumran, a rock-pool with enough area and a

RONNY REICH



RONNY REICH



Above: A double-chambered *mikveh* discovered during the excavation of a Hasmonean palace in Jericho. Steps descend into the active immersion chamber, which is separated from the dormant chamber (on the right) by a common wall. Note the small channel connecting the two chambers near the top of their common wall.

Below: A *mikveh* discovered among the ruins of first-century Jerusalem's Upper City



RONNY REICH



Above: A second *mikveh* that was uncovered in the ruins of first-century Jerusalem's Upper City

Below: One of the *mikvaot* used by Jewish sectarians who lived at Qumran two millennia ago. The lower part of this *mikveh* was cut into the soft marl that abounds in the vicinity of Qumran, while its upper part was constructed from stones and mortar. Plastered walls inside the immersion chamber ensured that no water leaked out.

depth sufficient for a man to immerse resisted ritual impurity. The sectarians surely understood the reverse to be true by implication, namely, that a rock-pool adequate for immersion imparted purity to the bather. The rabbis, however, explicitly said that a *mikveh* and its water that satisfied the five requirements of *sh'ur mikveh* both resisted and imparted ritual purity.

Already being applied in the late Second Temple period, this principle helps explain how the water level in a rain-fed *mikveh* was maintained. Applying the sages' principle, one simply had to add hand-drawn water to a *mikveh* that satisfied the requirements of *sh'ur mikveh*.

Cleaning and repairing a rain-fed *mikveh* during the summer was apparently problematic. How could ritually pure rainwater be channeled into a *mikveh* during the rainless summer months? To clean such a *mikveh*, a caretaker presumably skimmed debris off the surface with a strainer and removed sediment from the bottom with a siphoning tool. But what about repairing a leak? Emptying a rain-fed immersion chamber by hand meant waiting for the winter rains to replenish its water.

In Jerusalem, archaeologists have unearthed almost exclusively single-chambered, rain-fed *mikvaot* from the late Second Temple period. Excavations at Herodium and Masada also revealed a preponderance of single-chambered, rain-fed *mikvaot*. A second type of installation that archaeologists unearthed in relatively small numbers, both in Jerusalem and other places, was a double-chambered, rain-fed *mikveh*. Double-chambered, rain-fed *mikvaot* were found in slightly higher numbers outside of Jerusalem in more arid regions.

Ironically, the first-century, double-chambered *mikvaot* are far better known to laypersons than the much more numerous single-chambered *mikvaot* because of the eminent Israeli archaeologist Yigael Yadin. When excavating at Masada, Yadin identified first the double-chambered type as being a first-century *mikveh*, and accordingly, he publicized widely his identification. Moreover, modern observant Jews use exclusively double-chambered *mikvaot*. The fact that modern Jews still were using a type of *mikveh* known from archaeological excavations dating from the first century generated much interest, while the much more numerous single-chambered type received little attention.

The double-chambered design facilitated maintenance. Each chamber met the requirements for *sh'ur mikveh*, and both were connected by a duct. Depending on whether or not the two chambers of a double-chambered installation shared a common wall, the connecting duct could be very short; or, it could be longer in order to traverse the distance between two chambers not sharing a common wall. Exploiting the ritually purifying properties of a *mikveh*'s water, ancient Jews were able to empty, clean, repair and refill this type of *mikveh*.

Once the active immersion chamber had been emptied by keeping the common duct plugged and bailing out the water, it was swept clean, repaired and filled with impure, hand-drawn water. The ritually impure water was then easily purified by removing the plug in the duct connecting the active and dormant chambers. The moment ritually pure water from the dormant chamber came into contact with ritually impure water from the active chamber, the latter became ritually pure. Then the plug could be returned to its place. The water in the dormant chamber remained ritually pure and undepleted. This procedure allowed caretakers of double-chambered *mikvaot* to maintain them easily, and if need arose, to empty, clean, repair and refill them with

cistern water – something that could not be done to single-chambered *mikvaot*.

Conclusion

In the case of *mikvaot* from the late Second Temple period, the archaeological and literary records compliment one another in a remarkable way. The literary records tell us that a *mikveh* must have a floor with an area of at least one square cubit and a depth of three or more cubits. Archaeologists found immersion chambers conforming to these minimum specifications. The literary records also inform us that a *mikveh* and its water satisfying the requirements of *sh'ur mikveh* purify ritually impure water on contact, a principle that encouraged the development of a design whereby an active chamber and a dormant chamber were connected by a common duct. Archaeologists have discovered this type of *mikveh*, too. But something that archaeological excavations alone could show graphically was just how numerous *mikvaot* were in the late Second Temple period. In Jerusalem alone, archaeologists have unearthed over 150 *mikvaot* from the first century! 

*In reality, however, nearly every stepped water installation that archaeologists excavated exceeded these minimum dimensions. I suspect, therefore, that these stepped installations functioned as *mikvaot*.

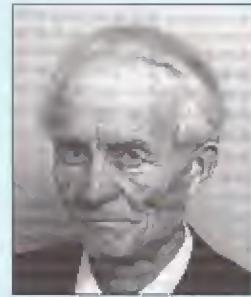
**At Qumran archaeologists found numerous water installations, both with and without steps. B. G. Wood has demonstrated that the stepless installations contained sufficient water to support a population of 200 people; therefore, he concluded that the stepped installations were immersion-related ("To Dip or to Sprinkle? The Qumran Cisterns in Perspective," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 256 [1984], 45-60). At least ten stepped chambers were found. Six of them were similar in craftsmanship and architectural details to *mikvaot* excavated in other places. Water for the Qumran community came from winter rains that washed down the Qumran Canyon and were diverted into the settlement through an aqueduct.

Sponsors of Memorial Pages*

Hannele Sørensen (Christian Friends of Israel - USA) – in memory of Professor Aapeli Saarisalo (1896–1986), professor of Oriental Literature at the University of Helsinki, Finland.

Here is a personal appreciation written by Mrs. Sørensen:

"Professor Saarisalo was a devoted friend of Israel. A pioneering archaeologist of the Holy Land, he explored the Galilee by foot decades before the establishment of the State of Israel. His numerous academic and popular books and articles made him one of the best-known scholars in Finland. His theological writings included themes concerning the relation of Paul and Judaism, and Judaism and early Christianity. His knowledge and love of Israel inspired me to study Semitic languages, including Hebrew. As I began my language studies, an assistant to Professor Saarisalo (from Helsinki University) provided me with much needed encouragement and guidance."



A volume in Saarisalo's memory was recently published by the Theological Institute of Finland (Kaisaniemenkatu 13 A 4. krs, FIN-00100 Helsinki, Finland. E-mail: teolinst@clinet.fi): *From the Ancient Sites of Israel: Essays on Archaeology, History and Theology in Memory of Aapeli Saarisalo (1896–1986)*, ed. Timo Eskola and Eero Junkkaala (1998). This 197-page tribute is a collection of nine essays, including: "The Ancient Road from the Bashan to the Mediterranean" by Moshe Kochavi; "The Territory of the Tribe of Asher" by Rafael Frankel; "The History of Israel against the Background of Ancient Near Eastern Religious History" by Alan Millard; and "Conquest, Infiltration or Imagination? Paradigms of Research Concerning the Origins of Israel" by Eero Junkkaala.

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Another view from inside the mikveh featured on the magazine cover.

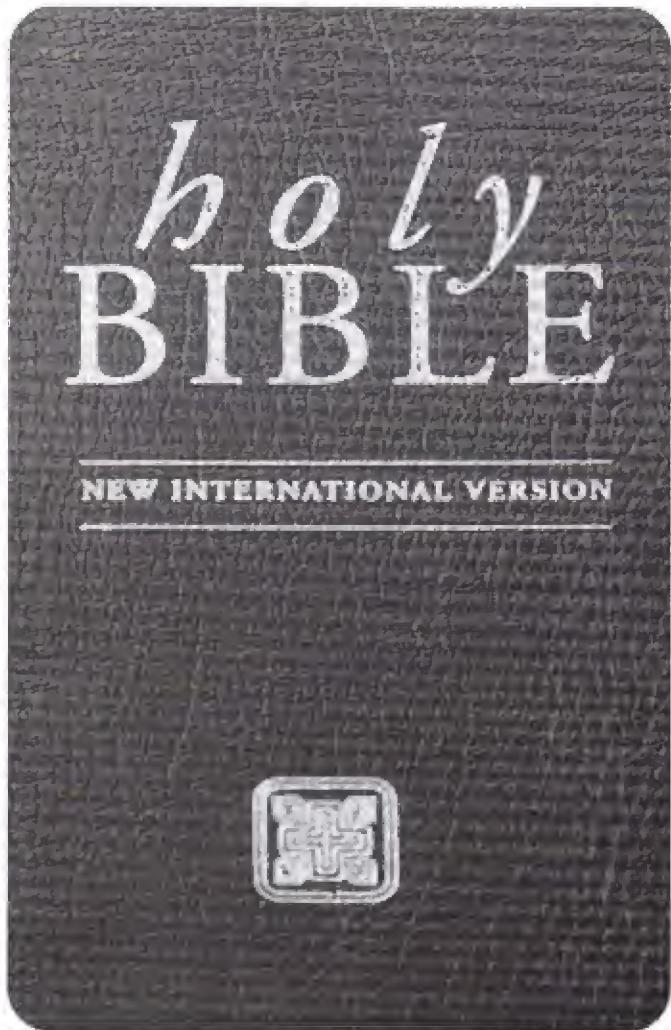
The New International J E S U S

..... BY DAVID BIVIN

Inaccuracy in translating either through ignorance or because of an obscure manuscript reading is to be expected, but to skew wittingly due to academic bias or religious tendentiousness smirches the reputation of a venerable profession.

The New Testament writer Luke described both Jesus and Paul as speaking in Hebrew (Acts 21:40, 22:2, 26:14). In all three places, however, translators of the *New International Version* rendered the Greek word *Hebraϊs* as "Aramaic."¹ Liberties with the text require explanation, so they supplied these notes: "Or *Hebrew*" at 26:14, and "Or possible *Hebrew*" at 21:40 and 22:2. To reflect more accurately the Greek, they would have done better to translate *Hebraϊs* as "Hebrew." If then concluding that such a translation might mislead the reader, they could have added a note expressing their concern, for example: "The Greek text literally reads 'Hebrew,' but many scholars think that most first-century Jews in the land of Israel spoke Aramaic; therefore, the reader should interpret 'Hebrew' to mean 'Aramaic.'"²

The NIV Study Bible does offer an explanation for the word "Aramaic" in Acts 21:40: "More likely Aramaic than Hebrew, since Aramaic was the most commonly used language among Palestinian Jews."³ On the word "Aramaic" in Acts 22:2, it again comments: "Actually, if he [Paul] had spoken in Hebrew, they [the crowd] would have become quieter in order not to miss a single word, because it would have been more difficult for them to understand."



This argument based on the crowd's relative silence seems a bit forced. When Paul motioned with his hand to the people, there was "a great silence" (21:40). When he began to speak in the "Aramaic" language, they became quieter (22:2). Had he spoken in Hebrew, according to *The NIV Study Bible* commentator Lewis Foster, the people would have become even quieter. How can one know how much quieter than quiet the people could have become? A more natural explanation would be that the people settled down when Paul motioned to them, and they became silent the moment he began to speak.

The *NIV* translators also rendered the adverb *Hebra'isti* as "in Aramaic" in John 5:2; 19:13, 17, 20; and 20:16. The Johannine verses have no accompanying notes to indicate that the Greek adverb may mean simply "in Hebrew."⁴ Interestingly, however, they rendered *Hebra'isti* as "in Hebrew" in Revelation 9:11 and 16:16. Here the Greek allowed no other option, since *Abaddon* (9:11) and *Harmagedon* (16:16) can only be the transliterations of Hebrew and not Aramaic words.

The notion that first-century Jews in the land of Israel predominantly spoke Aramaic was widespread from the middle of

the last century until the middle of this century – and continues to circulate – in academic and popular literature. For example, in 1898 the great German scholar Gustaf Dalman wrote: "Jesus grew up speaking the Aramaic tongue...He would be obliged to speak Aramaic to His disciples and to the people in order to be understood."⁵ Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, however, scholarly opinion has been migrating to a position which recognizes that most first-century Jews in the land of Israel were polyglots who spoke Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek.⁶

An academic argument that raged decades ago centered on Josephus' use of the Greek phrase *glotta Hebraion* (Hebrew tongue) and related expressions. Some scholars claimed that Josephus intended this phrase to mean the Aramaic tongue.⁷ Influenced by such thinking, William Arndt and Wilbur Gingrich, in their widely consulted New Testament Greek lexicon, defined *Hebra'is* as "the Hebrew language...i.e., the Aramaic spoken at that time in Palestine."⁸ Have the *NIV* translators recycled a faulty inference discarded by most scholars decades ago? Were Luke and John, and for that matter, Josephus, lax in their choice of words? Did they pen *Hebra'is* and *Hebra'isti* where they meant "Aramaic"? These first-century writers had at their disposal a standard Greek word for Aramaic, namely *Syristi* ([in] Syrian). Nearly forty years ago Jehoshua Grinz addressed these sort of questions in a seminal study about Hebrew as a spoken and written language in the late Second Temple period.⁹

Tassel-wearing Hypocrites

More unsettling was the *NIV*'s original translation of Matthew 23:5, which appeared in the 1973 and 1978 editions: "Everything they [the scribes and Pharisees] do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels of their prayer shawls long..." Jesus, like other observant Jews of his day, wore the *tsitsit* – the tassels that were attached to the four corners of an outer robe (Num. 15:37–41). Students of the Gospels know this from the story of the woman who suffered twelve years from a hemorrhage. When she approached Jesus from behind and touched his *kraspedon*, she was healed (Mt. 9:20). *Kraspedon* is the standard Greek equivalent of the period for the Hebrew *tsitsit*. For example, the Septuagint's translators rendered *tsitsit* in Numbers 15:37–41 three times as *kraspedon*.

When translating the Greek of Matthew 23:5, which speaks of scribes and Pharisees and their hypocrisy, the *NIV* translators originally rendered the plural form of *kraspedon* as "tassels" in the phrase "the tassels of their prayer shawls." The Greek reads literally, "They enlarge the tassels." "Of their prayer shawls" does not appear in the Greek and, ideally, this absence should have been indicated in a note, or by italicizing the missing words. This translation communicates perspicuously that Jesus criticized those wearing ostentatious ritual tassels.

In Matthew 9:20 (and its parallel, Lk. 8:44), a verse that speaks of Jesus' attire, the *NIV* translators rendered the Greek phrase *to*



kraspedon ton himation
autou as “the edge of his
cloak.”¹⁰ Neither “tassel” nor
“prayer shawl” appears in their
translation. Why did the transla-
tors not opt for a rendition of

Matthew 9:20 and its Lukan parallel
that would have been consistent with
Matthew 23:5? They could have translat-
ed the parallel verses to say that the woman
with the hemorrhage touched “the tassel of his
prayer shawl.” Moreover, before their eyes in
Matthew 9:20 and Luke 8:44 was the Greek equiva-
lent of tallith – *himation*. Did Jesus not wear – albeit
more discreetly – the same ritual tassels that scribes
and Pharisees wore?¹¹

Rendering the Greek *ta kraspeda* in Matthew 23:5
as “the tassels of their prayer shawls,” the translators
promoted a misperception of the tallith in Jesus’ day,
which persisted uncorrected until the *NIV*’s third edition.
Apparently, under the influence of what
modern Jews refer to as a tallith, a shawl-like covering
draped over the upper part of a man’s body during
prayer, they understood *ta kraspeda* to be the tassels
of prayer shawls. In the first century, however, the
tallith (mantle; the heavy woolen outer garment)
belonged to everyday dress and was not an article of
clothing that was worn only when praying. Concerned
about modesty, Jews did not go out in public dressed only
in a tunic – a light linen under-robe. They wore talliths to
cover their tunics. Nevertheless, the tallith was not specific-
ally a religious article.¹² It functioned as a poncho-like
piece of clothing, to which, since it had four corners, an
observant Jew attached tassels out of regard for Numbers
15:37–41.

In the third edition of the *NIV*, its editors revised the English of Matthew 23:5 to read “the tassels on their garments.” “The tassels of their prayer shawls” appeared in the first edition in 1973, remained uncorrected in the second edition in 1978, and was finally changed in the third edition in 1984. The original wording of Matthew 23:5 circulated in print for over a decade before being revised. Consequently, the first two editions remain in the hands of thousands of laypersons and continue to be read on a weekly basis before congregations the world over.

Even with the revision, one still detects a trace of tendentiousness. Why did the revisers leave Matthew

9:20 as “the edge of his cloak” while rendering Matthew 23:5 as “the tassels on their garments”? The revision removed a gross anachronism from the translation, but it failed to address an implicit syllogism with disturbing undertones: Jewish hypocrites wore tassels; Jesus was not a hypocrite; therefore, Jesus did not wear tassels.

Conclusion

Most readers of the New Testament do not consult scholarly commentaries. They simply read the text unassisted, or perhaps consult the notes of a favorite study Bible. An inaccurate rendering of a verse into a modern language can have widespread consequences in terms of people’s perception of Jesus and his teachings. In the case of the *NIV*, several verses, where the Greek for “Hebrew,” “in Hebrew” or “tassel(s)” appears were poorly rendered. Consequently, an ordinary reader of the *NIV* may assume that Jesus neither spoke Hebrew nor wore ritual tassels like the scribes and Pharisees. With respect to the tassels, the reader may assume that Jesus would have differed from the scribes and Pharisees. Perhaps one should dismiss these concerns as overblown. Nevertheless, the *NIV*’s translation contributes to blurring Jesus’ identification with his Jewish faith and heritage. If Christians – both Catholics and Protestants – could boast of a sterling record over the centuries in esteeming their Jewish heritage, then such lapses could go unchallenged. Unfortunately, however, the record is not sterling, but heavily tarnished. JP

1. The *New International Version* is copyrighted by the International Bible Society and published by Zondervan Bible Publishers.

2. A number of versions have marginal notes explaining that “Hebrew” refers to “Aramaic” (e.g., *New American Standard*; “Jewish Aramaic”; *New Berkeley Version*: “The language was the colloquial Aramaic that was used by the Jews of that period” [Acts 21:40]), but very rarely have Bible translators inserted the word “Aramaic” into the text.

3. The *NIV Study Bible* is copyrighted and published by Zondervan Bible Publishers.

4. With three exceptions (note the following paragraphs), none of the major English versions, beginning with the *Authorized Version* of 1611, has rendered *Hebra’is* and *Hebra’isti* in Jn. 5:2; 19:13, 17, 20; 20:16; Acts 21:40; 22:2 and 26:14 as “Aramaic” and “in Aramaic.” The *New International Version* stands out in this respect. The following twenty-eight versions have rendered *Hebra’is* and *Hebra’isti* as “(in) Hebrew,” “(in) the Hebrew tongue,” “(in) the Hebrew language,” or “(in) the Hebrew dialect”: *Authorized Version* (*King James Version*); *American Standard Version*; *Revised Standard Version*; *New King James Version*; *New American Standard Bible*; *New Revised Standard Version*; *The New English Bible*; *The Jerusalem Bible*; *New Jerusalem Bible*; *The Modern Language Bible*; *The New Berkeley Version in Modern English*; *The Bible: An American Translation* (NT: *Goodspeed*); *The New American Bible*; *The Bible:*

A New Translation (Moffatt); *The Amplified Bible*; *The Living Bible* (Taylor); *The Holy Bible: New Century Version*; *The New Testament in Modern English* (Phillips); *The New Testament in Modern Speech* (Weymouth); *Good News for Modern Man* (Bratcher); *Good News Bible*; *The Message: The New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs* (Peterson); *The New Testament: A Private Translation in the Language of the People* (C. B. Williams); *The New Testament: A New Translation in Plain English* (C. K. Williams); *The Simple English Bible: New Testament*; *The New Testament: A New Translation* (Barclay); *Jewish New Testament* (Stern); *Jesus: The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, combined in one narrative and rendered in modern English* (Templeton); *The Four Gospels: A New Translation* (Torrey).

One version's skewed handling of Acts 21:40, 22:2 and 26:14 is even more pronounced than the NIV's: *The New Living Translation*, published jointly by the International Bible Society and Tyndale House Publishers in 1996, rendered Acts 21:40 as "in their own language, Aramaic," with the note: "Or Hebrew." It rendered Acts 26:14 as "in Aramaic," with the note: "Or Hebrew." It rendered Acts 22:2 as "in their own language," with the note: "Greek in Aramaic." This note renders the NLT's readers a disservice since the Greek text does not say "in Aramaic," but rather, "in Hebrew"!

The Simple English Bible: New Testament (American edition), whose English vocabulary includes only 3,000 words, was published by the International Bible Translators in 1981. Except for Rev. 9:11 and 16:16 ("in Hebrew"; "in the Hebrew language"), the *SEB* rendered the occurrences of *Hebra'is* and *Hebra'isti* in the New Testament as "[in] the Aramaic language" or "in Aramaic" (Jn. 5:2; 19:13, 17, 20; 20:16; Acts 21:40; 22:2; 26:14). Only in two of these eight instances (Acts 22:2; 26:14) was a note of justification provided. To the translation "in Aramaic" in Acts 22:2, this note was appended: "the native language of the Jews." To the translation "in the Aramaic language" in Acts 26:14, this note was added: "The Jews had a special reverence for their native language."

A third case of translation that runs counter to the Greek text is found in David H. Stern's *Jewish New Testament* (1989). Stern, who usually rendered *Hebra'is* and *Hebra'isti* as "(in) Hebrew," three times translated these words "in Aramaic" (Jn. 5:2; 19:13, 17). It is unusual that in these instances he did not feel the need to justify his rendition with a note informing the reader that the Greek reads "in Hebrew." The reader has been left to believe that in these places the Greek text actually reads *Syristi* (in Aramaic).

5. Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902), p. 11. *The Words of Jesus* is the authorized English version of Dalman's 1898 *Die Worte Jesu*. In fairness to Dalman and in respect for his great erudition, one should keep in mind that he wrote these words in the year that the Cairo Genizah was discovered, long before the Dead Sea Scrolls came to light.

6. According to Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, Jr. and Edward Cook, "Prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the dominant view of the Semitic languages of Palestine in this period was essentially as follows: Hebrew had died; it was no longer learned at mother's knee. It was known only by the educated classes through study, just as educated medieval Europeans knew Latin... The spoken language of the Jews had in fact become Aramaic... The discovery of the scrolls swept these linguistic notions into the trash bin... Apart from copies of biblical books, about one out of six of the Dead Sea Scrolls is inscribed in Aramaic. Clearly the writing of an Aramaic Gospel was eminently possible. Yet the vast majority of the scrolls

were Hebrew texts. Hebrew was manifestly the principal literary language for the Jews of this period. The new discoveries underlined the still living, breathing, even supple character of that language. A few texts pointed to the use of Hebrew for speech as well as writing... A small minority of the scrolls were written in Greek. Their discovery has vouchsafed us a further glimpse into the linguistic complexity of first-century Jewish society. Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek: each was being used in particular situations of speech and writing" (*The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* [New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1996], pp. 8-10).

For a survey of the linguistic situation in first-century Israel, see Shmuel Safrai, "Spoken Languages in the Time of Jesus," *Jerusalem Perspective* 30 (Jan./Feb. 1991), 3-8, 13; and idem, "Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus," *Jerusalem Perspective* 31 (Mar./Apr. 1991), 3-8. James Barr has rightly criticized New Testament scholarship for continuing to function under the outdated and mistaken notion that Hebrew was not spoken in the first century ("Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek in the Hellenistic Age," *The Cambridge History of Judaism: The Hellenistic Age* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], pp. 79-114).

7. Even when Josephus wrote that he himself was a Hebrew speaker, scholars interpreted this to mean Aramaic. Like Paul, Josephus once addressed a crowd in Jerusalem during a time of great commotion (War 6:96). H. St. J. Thackeray's translation and note to War 6:96 illustrate the scholarly bias that often still exists regarding the linguistic situation in first-century Israel: "Josephus, standing so that his words might reach the ears not only of John but also of the multitude, delivered Caesar's message in Hebrew..." (*The Loeb Classical Library: Josephus*, vol. 3 [London: William Heinemann Ltd.; and Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961], p. 403). On the word "Hebrew," Thackeray commented: "I.e., Aramaic; cf. Acts 21:40, 22:2." He cited the passages from Acts as if they support his assertion that when Josephus mentioned Hebrew, he meant Aramaic. These New Testament passages are no support at all, since they, too, mention Hebrew, not Aramaic.

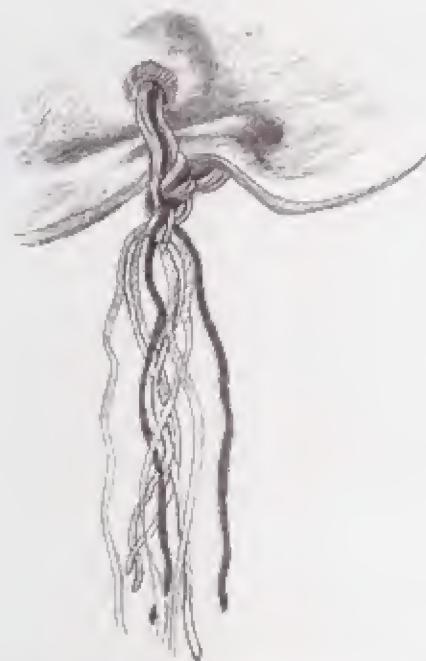
8. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and ed. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich (Chicago: University of Chicago Press; and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 212.

9. Joshua M. Grintz, "Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 79

A Jewish prayer shawl, with ritual tassels, frames these two pages

(1960), 32–47. Grinz stated: "An investigation into the writings of Josephus demonstrates beyond doubt that whenever Josephus mentions *glotta Hebraica* [Hebrew tongue], *Hebraion dialekton* [Hebrew dialect], etc., he always means 'Hebrew' and no other language" (p. 42). To support this statement, Grinz quoted Josephus (*Antig.* 1:33): "For which reason we also pass this day in repose from toil and call it the Sabbath [*Sabbata*], a word which in the Hebrew language [*Hebraion dialekton*] means 'rest'" (p. 42). Grinz commented: "Josephus derives, as had the Bible, the word Sabbath from the Hebrew *shavath*. In Aramaic the verb *shavath* does not exist. Aramaic translators use instead *natt*" (pp. 42–43). Another example from Josephus (*Antig.* 1:34) that Grinz provided is: "Now this man was called Adam which in Hebrew [*glotta Hebraica*] signifies 'red'" (p. 43). Grinz commented: "Thus Josephus derives *adam* [man] from *adom*, 'red.' In Aramaic 'red' is expressed by *sumka*; there is no

HILDA TWERK



Reconstruction drawing of a first-century tzitzit (ritual tassel). Much less complicated than a modern tzitzit, four cords, one of which was dyed blue, were passed through a hole in the tallit's corner and knotted, creating a tassel with eight ends.

root 'd-m in this language" (p. 43). Grinz emphasized that while it is true that Josephus in his writings referred to Aramaic, he "never said of any of the words cited in their Aramaic form that they were Hebrew" (p. 45).

10. The same Greek phrase, *to krapetōn ton himatiora autou* (the tassel of his outer robe), appears in Mt. 14:36 and its parallel, Mk. 6:56. Here, too, the NIV renders the phrase "the edge of his cloak."

11. The *New International Version* stands out in contrast to a majority of English versions, further evidence of tendentiousness. When translating Mt. 23:5 and Mt. 9:20, few English versions have made a distinction between Jesus' Jewish observance and that of his countrymen. I have checked the twenty-eight versions listed in Endnote 4. For the seven versions that, like the NIV, did make a distinction, see the accompanying chart.

12. See my "The Hem of His Garment," *Jerusalem Perspective* 7 (April 1988), 2.

Seven Tassel-free-Jesus Translations

BIBLE TRANSLATION

The Four Gospels: A New Translation
(Charles Cutler Torrey)

The New Testament in Modern English
(J. B. Phillips)

The Holy Bible: New Century Version

The Message: The New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs
(Eugene H. Peterson)

Good News Bible

The New English Bible

Jesus: The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, combined in one narrative and rendered in modern English
(Charles B. Templeton)

MATTHEW 9:20

"the hem of his garment"

"the edge of his cloak"

"the edge of his coat"

"his robe"
[Mt. 14:36 – "the edge of his coat"]

"the edge of his cloak"

"the edge of his cloak"

"she reached out and touched him"
[Mt. 14:36 – "the hem of your robe"]

MATTHEW 23:5

"their fringes"

"the tassels of their robes"

"their special prayer clothes"

"embroidered prayer shawls"

"the tassels on their cloaks"

"[go about...with large] tassels on their robes"

"[How they love] the [longest possible] tassels
on the corners of their robes"

Charles Cutler Torrey's *The Four Gospels: A New Translation* was published by Hodder & Stoughton in 1934. J. B. Phillips' *The New Testament in Modern English* was published by The Macmillan Company in 1958. The *Holy Bible: New Century Version* was published by Word Publishing in 1987. Eugene H. Peterson's *The Message: The New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs* was published by NavPress in 1993. The *Good News Bible*, Today's English Version was published by Thomas Nelson in 1976. The *New English Bible* was published jointly by Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press in 1961. Charles B. Templeton's *Jesus: The four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, combined in one narrative and rendered in modern English* was published by Simon and Schuster in 1971.

Parables of ill Repute

by David Flusser



Once Shmuel ha-Katan, a sage who flourished at the end of the first century C.E., decreed a day of fasting and prayer for rain. The people began their fast at sunset, and rain fell before sunrise. They interpreted the rain as a sign of divine favor. Then Shmuel told them a parable:

What does this situation resemble? It is like a slave who requests his ration from his master. The master says to them, "Give it to him so that I may not hear his voice!" (Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 25b)

On another occasion Shmuel decreed a time of fasting and prayer for rain. The people began their fast at sunset, but rain did not fall until late into the next evening. Again they interpreted the rain as a sign of divine favor. Then Shmuel told them a parable:

What does this situation resemble? It is like a slave who requests his ration from his master. The master says to them, "Wait until he languishes and suffers! Afterwards, give it to him!" (Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 25b)

In both of these parables, Shmuel cast God in an unsettling role. In the first, he depicted God as the irascible master who shuns the voice of his slave. The slave represents the people. In the second, again he depicted God as the master. This time, however, ignoring the request, the callous master makes his hungry slave suffer.

The point of these two parables is clear: the people have no reason to boast. The shock and humor of the parables, which obviously captured the attention of Shmuel's audience, emerge from the scandalous conduct attributed to God. Far from being noble, his conduct falls far short of expectations, both ancient and modern.

Shmuel's purposeful distortion of God's character served to heighten the dramatic effect of the parables. He did not intend that the master's conduct should be emulated: it is despicable.

The gap between our expectations and the master's conduct can be bridged only with laughter.

The synoptic Evangelists recorded approximately thirty different parables told by Jesus. Three synoptic parables remind us of Shmuel's scandalous parables, because the protagonists behave in a morally ambiguous manner. Interestingly, only Luke included these scandalous parables in his Gospel.

The first two scandalous parables deal with prayer: The Friend at Midnight (Lk. 11:5-8) and The Impious Judge (Lk. 18:2-8). In the



first parable, a man wakes a sleeping friend at midnight and asks for three loaves of bread. At first the sleepy friend tells his late-night visitor to go away. Motivated not by concern for his friend, but self-interest, the friend eventually acquiesces and gives the loaves to the man. Likewise, in the second parable, a judge who neither fears God nor has regard for humanity, finds himself cornered by a persistent widow demanding legal protection. Her repeated visits finally convince the judge that giving a ruling on her behalf will be the easiest way out of his predicament.

Each of

these parables sets up a mini-drama that parallels, but is antithetical to, reality. Of course, people petition God at all hours of the day with urgent requests, and widows look to him for justice. But unlike the sleepy friend who complies with the request out of embarrassment that the neighbors might hear, or simply out of frustration, God responds because of his genuine concern for humanity. And unlike the impious judge who grants justice because of the widow's unflagging appeals, God stands ready to protect those whom society has overlooked.

Jesus was not suggesting that the behavior of the sleepy friend or impious judge be emulated. On the contrary, their disappointing conduct represents a glaring contrast to God's. From the contrast, the parables' humor emerges.

The Dishonest Steward (Lk. 16:1-9) is Jesus' most scandalous parable. Originally told as a critique of the Essenes' attitude toward non-sectarians and their wealth, this parable portrays God as the master of a sly steward (a non-sectarian) who has mismanaged his money. Accordingly, the master notifies the steward that he will be dismissed. Faced with the horror of manual labor or begging for a livelihood, the steward summons each of the master's debtors and cancels the debt in the hope of creating for himself a safety net after his dismissal. To the audience's surprise, the master, who suffered financial loss because of the steward, praises him.

Here again, the aim of the parable is not to promote dishonest handling of money. Rather, using a very funny parable, Jesus criticized the Essenes centripetal mentality, which had found expression in their economic policy. The Essenes avoided commercial transactions with outsiders. The master's praise for the dishonest servant should not be interpreted as an endorsement of such improper behavior, but as a critique of the Essenes' narrow attitude toward non-sectarians and their money.¹

The scandalous elements of these three Lukan parables serve as another indication of the continuity in motifs and literary forms between the synoptic tradition and rabbinic literature. As I have

said elsewhere, the rabbinic writings constitute "our principal source" for interpreting Matthew, Mark and Luke.² For me at least, this conclusion means that Jesus stood closer to Pharisaic Judaism than to the other major first-century Jewish sects.

Lastly, Luke's inclusion of scandalous parables in his Gospel tells us something about his handling of his two written sources: Luke apparently sought to represent all facets of their contents. He was willing to include Jesus' scandalous parables, even if their inclusion meant that God might be perceived as behaving improperly and the point of the parables be misunderstood. Matthew and Mark may not have been willing to risk such consequences.³

As a Gospel writer, Luke was both independent of Matthew and Mark, and bold. Regarding his independence, he was the only Evangelist not to implicate the Pharisees in the events leading up to Jesus' death. Regarding his boldness, Luke alone mentioned the atrocities of Roman officials (cf. Lk. 13:1). The results of our present, brief study further attest to Luke's independence from Matthew and Mark, and his boldness – independence, by preserving the three scandalous parables, and boldness, by transmitting parables that portrayed God in a morally ambiguous light. □P

1. For a full discussion of the Dishonest Steward parable's meaning, see David Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1988), pp. 150-168.

2. Ibid., p. 24.

3. The closest Matthew came to including a scandalous parable in his Gospel was his inclusion of The Day Laborers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16). The scandalous and critical moment of this parable is God's declaration, "Am I not allowed to do what I wish with what is mine?" The evidence from the Synoptic Gospels suggests that Matthew and, particularly, Mark were more sensitive than Luke to including scandalous elements in their compositions.

US AND THEM: LOVING BOTH

Impressed by archaeologist and Dead Sea Scroll specialist Magen Broshi's article entitled "Hatred: An Essene Religious Principle and Its Christian Consequences,"¹ we abridged, adapted and popularized a portion of the article for readers of JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE.

We hope you enjoy it as much as we did.

Not too long ago scholars stood at a great disadvantage in their efforts to explain the background to Jesus' famous saying on love:

You have heard it said, "You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy." But I say to you, "Love your enemy, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is

in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends his rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." (Mt. 5:43–45, *NASB*)

In the past scholars speculated that Jesus was responding to a well-known folk proverb. Ancient Romans regarded treating friends kindly and taking revenge on enemies as being admirable. For example, Sulla, the



SHINE OF THE SUN/MOSAIC MUSEUM

Above: The Qumran Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH) as it looked at the beginning of its unrolling.

Pages 30 and 31: Clay inkwells unearthed in the excavations at Qumran. Scribes who copied some of the Dead Sea Scrolls probably dipped their quills in these inkwells.

famous Roman military commander, who died in 78 B.C.E., was honored by a monument bearing the inscription, “None of my friends ever did me a kindness, and none of my enemies ever did me a wrong, without being fully requited.”² Undoubtedly, the underlying concept of this inscription circulated in proverbial form among the diverse people groups of the Roman empire in various languages. But did some such proverbial saying inspire Jesus to respond with, “But I say to you, ‘Love your enemy...’”?

The larger context of Jesus’ saying includes Matthew 5:21–48. Six times in these twenty-seven verses

Jesus used the phrase, “But I say to you,” and each time he was offering his own distinctive interpretation on a specific verse from the Torah. Said another way, viewing Jesus’ saying on love as an authentic part of Matthew 5:21–48, one could suggest that Jesus’ words represent a response not to a proverb, but to an exegetical tradition linked to a verse from the Torah. If so, one may find clues helpful for illuminating the exegetical background of Jesus’ saying embedded in Second Temple-period Jewish literature.

With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, scholars benefited immensely from the infusion of new linguistic, comparative, archaeological and historical data into their research. Included among the scrolls written in Hebrew is the Manual of Discipline, which apparently functioned in some capacity as a manual for initiates entering the Dead Sea sect. In the opening paragraph of this scroll, one reads, “...in order to love all that He

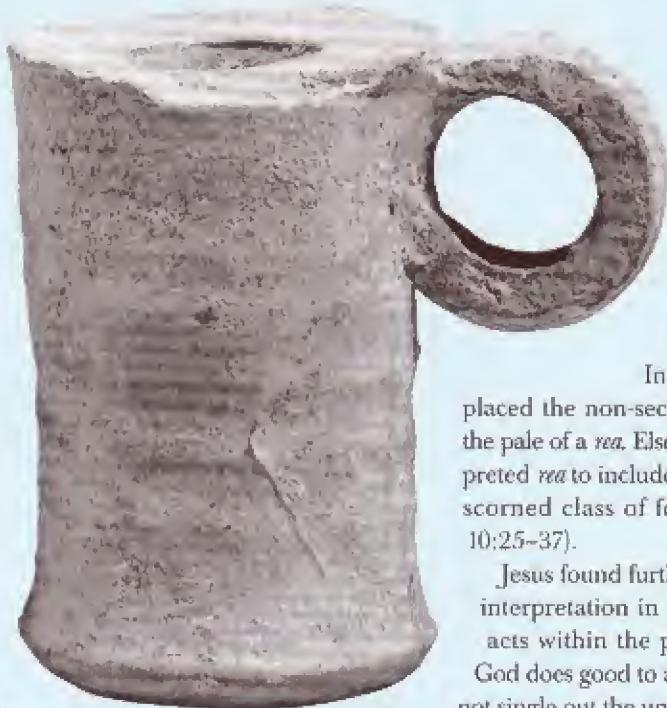


has chosen and to hate all that He has rejected” (1QS 1.3–4). Later in the same scroll, similar instructions are repeated:

These are the norms of the Way...in these times regarding love and hate: an eternal but concealed hatred for the Men of the Pit! [The member of the Way] shall leave them his property and labor, as a slave does his owner, and a poor man his oppressor; but he [the member] shall be a zealot for God’s Law, waiting for the Day of Vengeance. (1QS 9.21–23)

When describing the three main religious groups of his day – the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes – Josephus wrote that twice daily before their common meal, the Essenes swore an oath. That oath included a pledge “to hate forever the unjust and to fight together with the just” (*War* 2:139). Josephus’ report about the Essenes concurs with the attitude that the Manual of Discipline reflects.

The Essenes of the Dead Sea sect essentially saw themselves as allied with God, and according to their teachings, God would one day vindicate them and destroy those not belonging to the sect. Therefore, the Essenes taught that one should love his fellow-sectarians (those allied with God), but hate those outside the community (those opposed to God). Interestingly, their enmity was to be concealed like the ill will of a slave toward his master. They viewed their status in the God-ordained system of this transitory world in terms of a



slave who harbors hate against his master, but feels helpless to rebel against the institution of slavery.³

Ancient Jews regarded Leviticus 19:17–18 as an important passage about love: “You shall not hate your brother in your heart...you shall not avenge nor bear any grudge against one of your own people, but love your neighbor [*re'a*] as yourself.” The passage prohibits harboring enmity against “a brother” and taking vengeance or bearing a grudge against someone from one’s “own people.” The second verse adds the positive command to love a “*re'a*” as oneself.

These verses clearly state that hating a person from one’s own people – an insider, co-religionist, or friend – is forbidden. Applying a reverse type of logic, one could also interpret these verses to imply that hating a person not from one’s own people – an outsider, non-sectarian, or enemy – is permitted. To discourage such a reading of the passage, Jesus broadened his interpretation of *re'a* to include an enemy.

Reading Matthew 5:43–45 against the background of the exegetical trends and sectarian attitudes reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls, one appreciates better the aim of Jesus’ saying.⁴ Jesus rejected the sectarian paradigm, which the Essenes had built upon the idea that God was for the righteous, but against the wicked. By doing so, he undermined the Essene doctrine of hatred toward those outside the sect.

For Jesus, Leviticus 19:18 spoke not only about loving

friends,
neighbors
and fellow-
sectarians,

but also about
loving enemies.

In this instance, Jesus placed the non-sectarian well within the pale of a *re'a*. Elsewhere, Jesus interpreted *re'a* to include the Samaritans, a scorned class of foreigners (cf. Lk. 10:25–37).

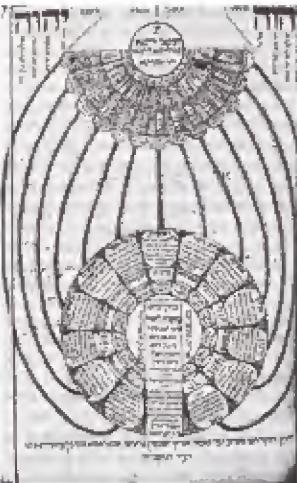
Jesus found further support for his interpretation in the way that God acts within the physical universe. God does good to all people. He does not single out the unrighteous for darkness, nor the wicked for shortage of rain (Mt. 5:45). Rather, God lavishes goodness, mercy and kindness on the righteous *and* the unrighteous, and it is this model of conduct that Jesus encouraged his disciples to emulate. — *The Editors*

1. Magen Broshi, “Hated: An Essene Religious Principle and Its Christian Consequences,” *Antikes Judentum und Frühes Christentum* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), pp. 245–252.

2. The inscription has been quoted from Philip Van Ness Myers, *Rome: Its Rise and Fall*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1901), p. 262.

3. Krister Stendahl, “Hate, Non-Retaliation, and Love,” *Harvard Theological Review* 55 (1962), 343–355; David Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins Of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1988), pp. 483–489.

4. Morton Smith was the first to point out the relationship between Matthew 5:43 and the Manual of Discipline. See Morton Smith, “Mt. 5:43: ‘Hate Thine Enemy,’” *Harvard Theological Review* 45 (1952), 71–73.



The thirteen attributes of God's mercy represented as the beard of one of the divine faces, according to *The Zohar* and the interpretation of Isaac Luria

medieval Jargon on First-century Lips *by David Bivin*

The following article is an attempt by the author to explain and correct an unfortunate choice of terminology early in his career. That poor choice may have influenced others as they were formulating their own ideas on ancient Jewish hermeneutics. While doing so, they tapped a rather startling source in support of their conclusions.

In 1981 I traveled to several cities in the United States and gave a talk entitled "Remez: Hinting at Scripture."¹ As part of that talk, I said something similar to the following:

One of the basic Jewish techniques of teaching in the time of Jesus involved the use of *remez*, which is the Hebrew word for "hint" or "allusion." Jewish teachers, instead of fully quoting verses of Scripture, commonly alluded to the passages upon which their lessons were based. By using the *remez* technique, a teacher conveyed a great deal of information with remarkable brevity, in much the same way a poet can express complex ideas through metaphors.

The rabbis could teach in this manner because most Jews of the period – and certainly all disciples of sages – were

well-versed in the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings. The substance of an allusion sometimes was found in a passage immediately before or after the verse at which the teacher had hinted. To quote the entire passage was unnecessary since most in the audience had learned large segments of Scripture by rote. The moment a teacher made an allusion, the whole passage flashed across the mind's eye of the biblically literate listener.

One finds numerous examples of *remez* in the Gospels. Many Christians, however, lack the scriptural background such a technique assumes. As a result, they run the risk of missing the subtler aspects of Jesus' teachings.

John the Baptist used *remez* when he asked Jesus, "Are you the coming [one]?" (Lk. 7:20; Mt. 11:3). John hinted at "The

Coming One" of Malachi 3:1 and Zechariah 9:9. Jesus responded in like manner: "The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are brought back to life and the poor have the good news preached to them." Jesus' answer contained hints at Isaiah 29:18, 35:5–6, 42:7 and 61:1. The allusions John and Jesus made were not solely for economy of words. The hinting constituted a sophisticated way of commenting upon Scripture....²

Jesus and other Jewish Scripture exegetes of the first centuries of the Common Era made frequent allusions to Scripture. While my description of this habit was accurate, labeling it *remez* was shortsighted. Not anticipating the results, I bandied about the word *remez* for its rhetorical effect for the same reason that a preacher might speak of the Hebrew word *Hesed* instead of the English "grace" or "loving-kindness." I intended *remez* to convey simply the idea of an "allusion" to Scripture. If I had adhered to English vocabulary, some of the present confusion may never have arisen.³

I suspect that my unfortunate choice of wording may have played a role in encouraging others to zero in on this term and advance novel ideas concerning its relevance for studying the Gospels. For example, describing *remez* as belonging to the "four basic modes of Scripture interpretation used by the rabbis," and then referring to these four by the acronym *Pardes*, one popular Bible commentator unwittingly has linked *remez* to a medieval system of scriptural interpretation.⁴ Irrespective of his definition for the word, labeling *remez* as the "r" in *Pardes* associated it with kabbalistic trends.⁵ The earliest sages, who were known as the tannaim, did not speak of four modes of scriptural interpretation. Rather, they initially enumerated seven hermeneutical principles.

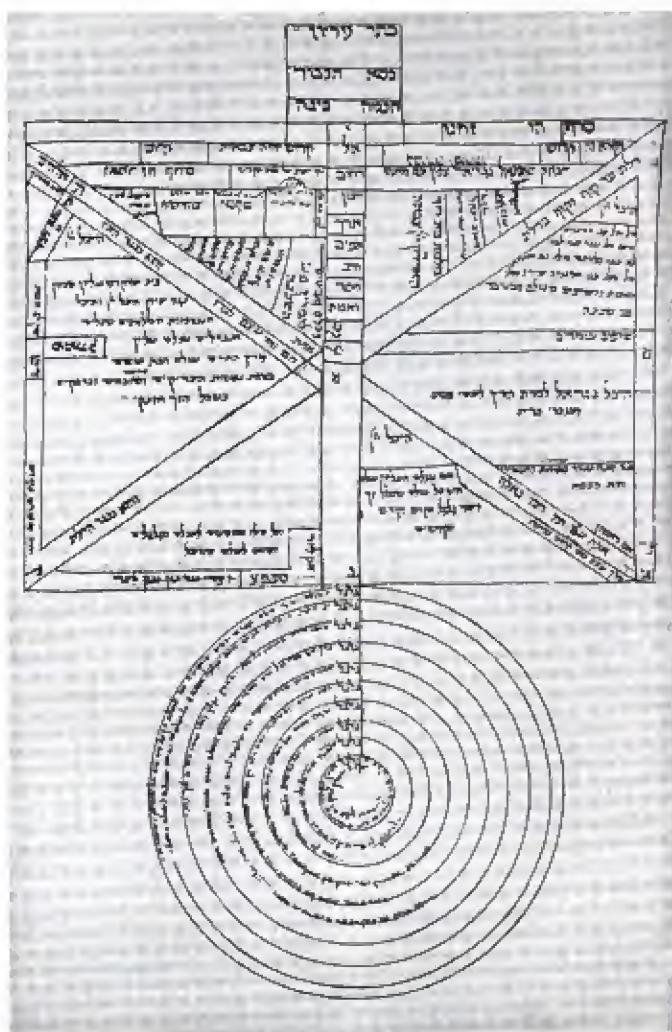
Israel's ancient sages never included *remez* among their methods, modes or principles of Scripture interpretation. While they did speak about words or phrases from Scripture being a *remez* to various things, such as the resurrection of the dead, they employed it to mean basically "an allusion to" or "a hint of." To label *remez* as a formal hermeneutical principle in the period to which the earliest sages belonged, invests the word with meaning it would carry only at a later time.

Hillel, a contemporary of Herod the Great, compiled a list of seven hermeneutical principles.⁶ A century later, Rabbi Yishmael expanded this list to thirteen,⁷ and Rabbi Eliezer ben Yose the Galilean further expanded the list to thirty-two.⁸ None of these lists includes *remez*, or for that matter, the other three modes of kabbalistic scriptural interpretation included in the acronym *Pardes* – *peshat*, *derash* and *sod*.

The earlier sages had not employed a method of scriptural interpretation that carried the formal designation *remez*. A thousand years later, however, the situation changed once highly influential mystical trends began reshaping rabbinic Judaism. The late-thirteenth-century Kabbalists designated one of their

distinctive mystical modes of interpretation as *remez*.

When collectively referring to these interpretive modes, students of the Kabbalah speak of *Pardes* (literally, "garden," i.e., "the Garden of the Torah"), which is an acronym derived from the initial letter of each of the four terms (p-r-d-s).⁹ The literal meanings of these four Hebrew words – *peshat* (simple, plain; i.e., the literal), *remez* (hint, allusion; i.e., the allegorical), *derash* (homily, sermon; i.e., the homiletic) and *sod* (secret; i.e., the mystical) – offer little assistance for understanding how these four modes of interpretation functioned within the kabbalistic system. According to the late Professor Gershon Scholem, pioneer researcher in the field of Kabbalah, Moses ben Shem Tov of Leon was the first-known writer to mention the acronym *Pardes*. He did so about 1290 in a composition entitled *Sefer Pardes*.¹⁰ Moses ben Shem Tov also wrote *The Zohar*, which became the most influential work of the Spanish Kabbalists.¹¹



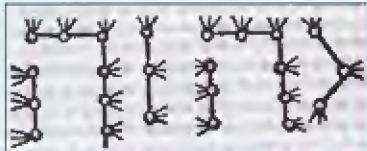
BAYERISCHE STAATSBIBLIOTHEK, MÜNCHEN

A representation of the ten Sefirot (the stages of emanation that form the realm of God's manifestation), with their corresponding angelic camps and astronomical spheres extending to earth. From a miscellany that probably originated in Italy about 1400. Cod. Hebr. Ms. 179, fol. 5v

The Kabbalists were mystics *par excellence*, and they pursued vigorously Scripture's concealed meanings. They aspired to an elevated spiritual awareness by gaining access to concealed knowledge through scrutinizing each letter of the biblical text and through ecstatic ascents into heaven. For instance, on the basis of their distinctive beliefs, they probed the creation of the world; the ascent to and passage through the seven palaces in the uppermost of the firmaments; the contents of each of the seven palaces; the measurements and secret names of the body parts of the Creator; and the names of angels and of God. Their longing for esoteric knowledge may be traced back in part to earlier Gnostic speculations. Such speculations left their imprints on the Kabbalah.¹²

Jesus and other personalities of the New Testament made manifold allusions to Scripture. In Hebrew, the word for "allusion" or "hint" is *remez*. From my reading of early rabbinic texts, to describe *remez* as a mode of Scripture interpretation or a hermeneutical principle runs the risk of inaccurately representing the language of the sages. To assign *remez* a place among first-century hermeneutical principles while including it as one of the four components of *Pardes* constitutes a glaring anachronism. The acronym *Pardes* belongs exclusively to the domain of the Kabbalah. JP

The Tetragrammaton written magically, with each letter containing several radiating circles of light ("eyes"). From Moses Cordovero, *Pardes Rimmonim* (Czadov, 1592).



JEWISH NATIONAL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

1. "Remez: Hinting at Scripture" was one of the lectures delivered as part of a seminar that I conducted in several U.S. cities in 1981. Two years later I co-authored *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus*. This book contains no reference to *remez*. I included the "Remez" lecture on one of the audio cassettes in the "Reading the Gospels Hebraically" teaching series.

2. I repeated this lecture during the speaking tour, both before and after it was recorded. As I developed the presentation, I adapted the wording. Nevertheless, its essence remained identical to this quotation.

3. Within two years of recording "Remez: Hinting at Scripture," I realized the potential for confusion. In my published writings, therefore, I have never used the word *remez*. See, for example, my "Principles of Rabbinic Interpretation: Part 1," *Jerusalem Perspective* 8 (May 1988), 1–2; and "Principles of Rabbinic Interpretation: Part 2," *Jerusalem Perspective* 9 (June 1988), 4.

4. David H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), pp. 11–12. I use the word "unwittingly" because elsewhere in his commentary, Stern distances himself from the Kabbalah. For example, in his comment on 1 Tim. 4:1, Stern writes: "What kinds of 'deceiving spirits and things taught by demons' are they 'paying attention to'...? For the moment, confining ourselves only to religions, we may note: (1) Eastern religions...[9] The occult, including astrology, parapsychology, *kabbalah* (the occult tradition within Judaism). Why

do people turn to these substitutes for the truth...?" (*Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 643).

Stern is not alone in attributing the four-fold kabbalistic system of interpretation – *peshat, remez, derash* and *sod* – to Jesus and other sages of his time. Despite the anachronism and kabbalistic link, other Christian educators do the same. For example, John Fieldsend, director of The Centre for Biblical and Hebraic Studies, which was established by Prophetic Word Ministries Trust of Moggerhanger, England, and editor of its journal, *Pardes*, has described in detail the component methodologies of "Pardes" – *peshat, remez, derash* and *sod*. As part of his conclusion, he wrote: "We have, in understanding the use of PARDES, a tool that can help us read the Scriptures with something of the mind of those whom God used to write them" ("Hermeneutics and the Significance of the Acronym 'Pardes,'" *Pardes* 3.1 [Feb. 1999], 16). Only if post-talmudic Jewish mystics wrote the New Testament can I imagine this statement to be pertinent.

5. Stern elsewhere has referred to *remez* as "a hint of a very deep truth" (*Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 12). He also has written: "...behind Hosea's *p'shat* was God's *remez* to be revealed in its time and lends credibility to the 'PaRDeS' mode of interpretation" (p. 13). Stern has suggested that *remez* is behind Mt. 2:15 (pp. 11–14); 2:18 (p. 14); 21:2–7 (pp. 61–62); Mk. 12:29 (pp. 96–97); Lk. 10:15 (p. 121); Jn. 6:70 (p. 174); Rom. 15:3–4 (p. 436); and Gal. 3:8 (p. 544). Whether discussing the words of Jesus, the words of a Gospel writer, or the words of a writer of an epistle, he refers the reader back to his note at Mt. 2:15 where he originally defined *remez*.

In the New Testament and the Dead Sea Scrolls, one can find cases where interpreters viewed biblical passages as having been unclear at the time of their composition, but now entirely intelligible to them (e.g., 1 Pet. 1:10–12; 1 QpHab 7.4). To call this *remez*, however, imports a Medieval mystical hermeneutical technical term and its distinctive associations into the first century. Are inkwell and quill a word processor?

6. Jerusalem Talmud, Pesahim 6.1, 33^a; Tosefta, Sanhedrin 7:11. The seven hermeneutical principles attributed to Hillel are: 1. *Kal va-Homer* (simple and complex): inference from minor to major case ("how much more so"); 2. *Gezera shavah* (equal commandment): two biblical commandments having a common word or phrase are subject to the same regulations and applications; 3. *Binyan av nikavut etta* (a sweeping principle [derived] from one scriptural passage): one scripture serves as a model for the interpretation of others, so that a legal decision based on the one is valid for the others; 4. *Binyan av mishne ketuvim* (a sweeping principle [derived] from two scriptural passages): two scriptures having a common characteristic serve as a model for the interpretation of others, so that a legal decision based on the two is valid for the others; 5. *Kelal uferat uferat ukelal* (general and particular, or particular and general): one scripture, general in nature, can be interpreted more precisely by means of a second scripture that is specific, or particular, in nature, and vice versa; 6. *Kayotse bo bemakom atter* (like that in another place): the interpretation of a scriptural passage by means of another passage having similar content; 7. *Davar halamed me'inanya* (a thing that is learned from the subject): an interpretation of a scripture that is deduced from its context.

7. Sifra, beginning. For an excellent description of Yishmael's thirteen hermeneutical principles, see Louis Jacobs, "Hermeneutics," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1972), 8:366–372. See also, Menachem Elon, "Interpretation," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 8:1419–1422.

8. Mishnat Rabbi Eliezer. For a description of Eliezer ben Yose's hermeneutical principles, see H. L. Strack and Günter Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press,

David Stern Responds

David Bivin believes that I have erred by using the "PaRDeS method" of Bible interpretation, which was developed in the Middle Ages, to deal with biblical texts written long before, and that by so doing I have unwittingly encouraged people to pursue kabbala.

I see things differently, but first let me indicate points on which we agree. First, as Bivin acknowledges in footnote 4, we agree that kabbala is a form of mysticism based on Gnostic and other occult and nonbiblical importations into Judaism and thus to be given no credibility. Second, I have no reason to doubt Gershom Scholem's conclusion that the acronym PaRDeS, used as a mnemonic for remembering the words *p'shat, remez, drash* and *sod*, dates from the Middle Ages, and that it was the kabbalists who developed PaRDeS into an exegetical method.

But even though these four ways of dealing with a text were systematized by the kabbalists, they existed long before. A computer search of early rabbinic literature — Talmud, Midrash Rabbah, Mekhilta, Sifra, Sifre and the like, a good deal of which dates from the first century and earlier — yielded dozens of examples of the rabbis pointing out a *remez* in just the senses in which Bivin and I have used the term. Therefore I think he is wrong in writing that "Israel's ancient sages never included *remez* among their methods, modes or principles of Scripture interpretation." In fact, his next sentence proves the opposite. And the following sentence implies I said something I didn't say: I did not declare *remez* a "formal hermeneutical principle"; what I do say is that the New Testament writers, like their contemporaries among the rabbis, made use of *p'shat, drash* (or *midrash*), *remez* and *sod*. Likewise, I have never

said that when the New Testament was written PaRDeS constituted a hermeneutical system like the principles of Hillel, Ishmael and Eleazar ben Yose the Galilean.

More relevant for my approach is what has happened to PaRDeS in more recent times: it has become part of the standard equipment of Jewish biblical interpretation without having kabbalistic overtones. Any student at a yeshiva will encounter the four terms of PaRDeS in the normal pursuit of his studies, even in institutions which eschew kabbala. In these settings "PaRDeS" is only a mnemonic; and its meaning, "garden," is used only to help remember the acronym.

Clearly the New Testament writers employed ways of dealing with Tanakh texts in addition to the historical-grammatical-linguistic method recognized by modern scholars (which is approximately what is meant by the *p'shat*). My note to Mattityahu (Matthew) 2:15 on pages 11-14 of the *Jewish New Testament Commentary* points out that when the author writes that Yeshua's leaving Egypt to return to the Land of Israel "fulfilled" the citation from Scripture, "Out of Egypt I called my son" (Hosea 11:1), Mattityahu was making use of a *remez*. The *p'shat* of Hosea 11:1 is that "my son" refers to the people of Israel and alludes to Exodus 4:22; the prophet is not speaking about Yeshua at all. It is Mattityahu, not Hosea, who operates on the prophet's text and sees in it a hint of Yeshua. There needs to be a word for talking about such things. The word is *remez*.

I don't think David Bivin needs to apologize for using this word. And he certainly shouldn't feel guilty of having promoted kabbala (I don't). Moreover, I do not grant the kabbalists exclusive

possession of the "garden" (PaRDeS) any more than I grant the New Agers possession of the rainbow, which God set in the sky as a sign for Noah — what right do the New Agers have to take it away from Bible-believers and claim it for themselves? Likewise, many biblical feasts have pagan historical origins. There is no shame in using an acronym developed by kabbalists to remember four ways of interpreting texts which have been used widely since before the time of Yeshua. I think this whole matter is a non-problem. My only caveat here would be that we ought not to stop with PaRDeS or make it an exclusive system — this inhibits thought instead of promoting it. Rather, we should consider all relevant ways of understanding God's word to humanity, including and going beyond PaRDeS.

Let me close by thanking David Bivin, whom I have known since 1974, when I met him on my first visit to Israel, for offering me the opportunity to respond to his article in the issue of JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE where it appears.

Born in Los Angeles in 1935, David H. Stern earned a Ph.D. in economics from Princeton University, was a professor at UCLA, mountain climber, co-author of a book on surfing, and owner of health-food stores. In 1975 he received a Master of Divinity degree from Fuller Theological Seminary. In 1979 he and his family "made aliyah" (immigrated to Israel). Stern's *New Testament translation*, *Jewish New Testament*, is widely circulated, and his 930-page commentary on this translation, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, is one of several books he has written.

1996), pp. 22-30. See also Barnett David Klien, "Baraita of 32 Rules," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 4:194-195.

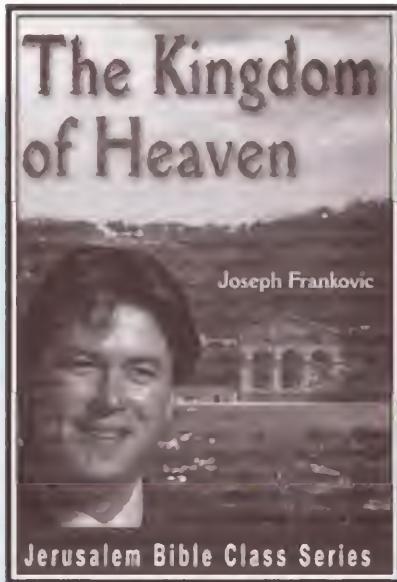
9. Note the similarity of Stern's wording: "These four methods of working a text [*peshat, remez, derash, sod*] are remembered by the Hebrew word 'PaRDeS,' an acronym formed from the initials: it means 'orchard' or 'garden'" (*Jewish New Testament Commentary*, p. 12).

10. Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 3rd revised ed. (New York: Schocken Books, 1974), p. 400; idem, "Kabbalah," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 10:623.

11. Idem, "Kabbalah," p. 532. Moses ben Shem Tov wrote *The Zohar* between 1280 and 1286.

12. Joseph Dan, "Midrash and the Dawn of Kabbalah," in *Midrash and Literature*, eds. G. Hartman and S. Budick (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 135, 132. See also Louis Ginzberg, *On Jewish Law and Lore* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), pp. 188, 190, 192-193. Note Scholem's statement: "Their [the Kabbalists'] vocabulary and favorite similes show traces of Agadic influence in proportions equal to those of philosophy and Gnosticism; Scripture being, of course, the strongest element of all" (*Major Trends*, p. 32).





The Kingdom of Heaven

Joseph Frankovic. Tulsa, OK: HaKesher, 1998. 52 pp.

Jesus never neglected an opportunity to speak about the Kingdom of Heaven. Originally intended to be a clear message, it has degenerated into a static-laden inter-communication between Jesus and too many of his modern-day followers. Happily for those trying to tune into Jesus' program, Joseph Frankovic has enucleated the most significant conceptual aspects of the Kingdom of Heaven from the Synoptic Gospels and presented them in a readable booklet.

The author acknowledges that while reading the Synoptic Gospels one encounters difficult passages for trying to grasp exactly what Jesus meant by the Kingdom of Heaven. For centuries scholars have wrestled with identifying the precise moment when the Kingdom of Heaven was (or, will be) inaugurated. Should one envision it in terms of an inchoate model, as C. H. Dodd's "realized eschatology" teaches? Or is Albert Schweitzer's model of a "*sequente Eschatologie*" closer to the mark? Frankovic argues for neither: "The Kingdom of Heaven is the *present reality* of God's redemptive power in the world *today*" (italics mine, p. 35).

According to the author, "The sages and rabbis were fond of talking about God in terms of his people enthroning

him as king...[They] enjoyed talking about people of faith who had submitted their wills to God and were allowing him to reign in their lives" (p. 12). Thus, by consulting what ancient Jewish commentators said about certain biblical passages, one can gain powerful insights into Jesus' perception of the Kingdom of Heaven. Frankovic zeros in on key interpretations that became attached to Exodus 15:18 and 20:2. He concludes that Jesus neither coined the term nor originated the concept, but borrowed it from the parlance of Israel's sages and tailored its content for his distinctive purposes.

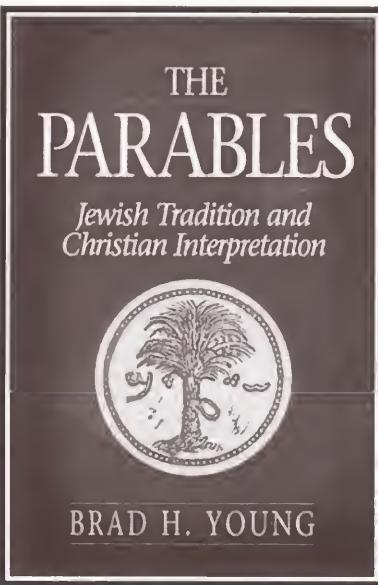
Distinguishing between the two principal nuances that the Kingdom of Heaven carries in Jesus' teachings is another important step toward a more accurate understanding. Jesus often employed the term to mean that God had taken charge. In other words, whenever God acts redemptively, one may say that God's Kingdom has come (cf. Lk. 11:20). Jesus also spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven in reference to that group whose adherents had embraced his messianic claims (cf. Mt. 11:11). In other words, those people who had allied themselves with the redemptive movement that he was leading constituted the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus, Frankovic writes, "The common denom-

inator...is God's taking charge. Whenever a supernatural manifestation of God's power occurs, he has taken charge. Likewise, God also has taken charge of the lives of those who have decided to follow Jesus" (pp. 49–50, endnote 12). Jesus' followers have entered into a unique partnership. "Empowered by his [God's] Holy Spirit, they selflessly dedicate themselves to the ongoing task of feeding, clothing, housing, educating, visiting, comforting, defending, redeeming and healing hurting humanity" (p. 33).

In essence, upon accepting Jesus' call to discipleship, a person entered into the Kingdom of Heaven. For Jesus, entering meant that first one had to submit radically to God's will. Obedience characterizes the lifestyle of a genuine follower of Jesus – regardless of whether that follower flourished nineteen centuries ago or lives today.

For anyone wanting to learn more about the responsibilities, demands, privileges and rewards of aligning oneself with this redemptive program, reading *The Kingdom of Heaven* and internalizing its message would be a good place to start.

Loren Huss
Anamosa, IA
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The Parables:

Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation

Brad H. Young. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998. 332 pp.

In his most recent book, Professor Brad Young has returned to Jesus' parables. Nine years after the publication of his doctoral dissertation on the same subject,* he again brings his formidable linguistic skills in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic to bear on both synoptic and Jewish parables. The result of this extensive research yields unique insights that will enable students of the Gospels to explore additional facets of Jesus' teaching.

Young shows that among the hundreds of extant rabbinic parables, parallels can be found to those in Matthew, Mark and Luke. For these mini-dramas, Israel's sages often called upon the same cast of actors as did Jesus. They posed similar questions about God's character and addressed related ethical concerns common to daily life. Moreover, they designed their parables to have a crispness of presentation that Christians associate with their synoptic counterparts. Capitalizing on this already developed and highly effective didactic tool, Jesus modified and adapted his parables for each new occasion. Nevertheless, his parables do *not* depart from the conventions of the genre.

Young's conviction regarding the importance of discovering the single, main point that a parable was intended to

make stands as a salient conclusion of his study. Motivated by this conclusion, he writes:

The primary focus of the parables can be understood only by careful examination of the words of Jesus in the Gospel texts and by an in-depth study of their setting. When care is taken to consider the Hebrew character of the saying of Jesus, as well as parallel texts in early Jewish literature, the main point of the parables' message will emerge from the side issues that obscure the clear purpose of each illustration. Many of these vital issues raised in contemporary scholarly discussion will be clarified by linguistic analysis and comparative study of religious ideas. (p. 44)

The author has structured his book in a way which benefits the reader who wants to study a particular parable, or related group of parables. Under sub-headings the elements of Young's exegetical methodology are applied. Thus, for a given synoptic parable, he discusses such topics as its primary focus, setting in life (or, *sitz en leben*), parallel rabbinic parables, Jewish theology of the topic, Christian interpretations and the decisive action for which the parable calls. The excellent footnotes and the indexes

greatly facilitate examining at firsthand the relevant academic literature and ancient sources.

In *The Parables: Jewish Tradition and Christian Interpretation*, the author has produced more than a treatise on a most important topic: for the non-specialist the book offers a timeless window through which he or she may peer into the world of the Jewish sages and their disciples. For those exploring their textual-conceptual world for the first time, reading this book will prove an exciting and enriching experience. Young's solid research will challenge traditional interpretations, but equipped with his insights and understanding, and encouraged by his enthusiasm, many readers will hear more distinctly Jesus' clarion call to action – a call that traditional interpretations sometimes muffle.

Richard W. Purcell
Issachar Ministries
St. Helens, U.K.

*After being out of print for a few years, Brad Young's *Jesus And His Jewish Parables* is again available. To obtain copies of the book, contact JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE by phone, fax, or letter (see p. 3). To order online, go to <http://www.JerusalemPerspective.com>.

Glossary

aggadah (also *haggadah*) – the ethical sayings and scriptural exposition of the sages, in contrast to their halachic statements; the non-legal part of rabbinic literature in contrast to halachah.

aggadic – pertaining to aggadah.

genizah – (storing) – a place for storing damaged or worn-out books or ritual objects containing the name of God. According to halachah, such objects could not be destroyed, but were hidden so that they would not be defiled. When the *genizah* could hold no more, its contents were buried in the cemetery. The *genizah* was usually a room attached to the synagogue. The most famous of these is the Cairo Genizah, discovered in 1896 in the attic of the Ezra Synagogue in Fostat (Old Cairo), where most of Ben Sira and the Damascus Document, two lost Hebrew books, were discovered.

halachah – (plural: *halachot*) law, regulation; the legal ruling on a particular issue; the body of Jewish law, especially the legal part of rabbinic literature, thus often the opposite of aggadah.

halachic – pertaining to halachah.

Hasmonean – pertaining to a family of Jewish priests who led a successful revolt that began in 168 B.C. against the Hellenized Selucid rulers of Syria. The Hasmoneans, nicknamed the Macabees, ruled the land of Israel from 142 to 63 B.C.

mikveh – (a gathering, accumulation [of water]; plural: *mikvaot*) pool of water for immersing the body to purify it from ritual uncleanness. The *mikveh* is similarly used to purify vessels (Nun. 31:22–23). Immersion in a *mikveh* is also obligatory for proselytes, as part of their ceremony of conversion.

Mishnah – (repetition, from the root *sh-n-h*, to repeat) the collection of Oral Torah compiled and committed to writing around 200 A.D. by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi. It records the sayings of sages who lived and taught during the previous several hundred years. In its narrow sense, “mishnah” (not capitalized) refers to an individual saying or ruling found in the Mishnah.

Second Temple period – literally, the period from the rebuilding of the Temple (536–516 B.C.) to its destruction by the Romans in 70 A.D. However, the term usually refers to the latter part of this period, beginning with the Hasmonean Uprising in 168 B.C. and often extending to the end of the Bar-Kochva Revolt in 135 A.D.

Septuagint – Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures completed in Egypt between approximately 250 and 100 B.C.

synoptic – an adjective derived from *synopsesthai*, a Greek word meaning “to view together or at the same time”; specifically, refers to the first three gospels of the New Testament. The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) are so similar in form and content that it is convenient to view them together.

tannaim – (sages from Hillel’s time (died c. 10 B.C.) until the generation (c. 230 A.D.) after Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi, the compiler of the Mishnah. Singular: *tanna*.

Tosefta – (the addition) a collection of Oral Torah supplementing the Mishnah. Compiled about 220–230 A.D., a generation after the Mishnah.

Salome Portrait on JP 55 Cover

The portrait on our last magazine cover does not look like the real Salome, the queen that we see on the newly discovered coin. But that is the point! The portrait represents the popular image of Salome — a real floozy!

Since the cover of a magazine must command attention, I portrayed Salome by means of a bold, modernistic collage. Combining features from various places, I aimed for an expressive rather than a realistic interpretation.

I based Salome’s overall look on Amedeo Modigliani’s “Reclining Nude.” A Jewish Italian painter, Modigliani painted this nude in 1916. His sensuous and warm depictions of women appeal to me. (To use this particular painting in creating a depiction of Salome seemed rather appropriate!)

Modigliani rarely painted the eyes of his sitters in any detail. He preferred reducing the eyes to two almond shapes, and often he omitted the pupils. In the case of “Reclining Nude,” he substituted two dark brown, almond-shaped patches.

Modigliani’s style, however, is not entirely suited to the commercial needs of a magazine cover. Dominating a portrait, eyes immediately catch the attention of a passerby; therefore, I replaced the almond-shaped patches with eyes having large gray pupils. In order to emphasize the strangeness of the face, I enlarged and incorrectly positioned Salome’s right eye. Both of her pupils came from the same eye.

The ear recalls the style of David Hockney’s photo collages. Hockney is one of England’s foremost contemporary painters. I painted the hair with one of the Adobe Photoshop’s brushes, from a detail of hair that I found in a book about beauty and grooming. Finally, generating the mouth with the computer, I made it sensuous and full, but not so much as to compete with the eyes. – Helen Twena

About the Authors

David Bivin is director of the Jerusalem School and publisher-editor of JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE magazine. Arriving in Israel in 1963, he became one of Robert Lindsey’s first students in Jerusalem. As a Hebrew University graduate student between 1963 and 1969, Bivin also studied under professors David Flusser, Shmuel Safrai, Menahem Stern and Yechezkel Kutscher.

David Flusser, a founding member of the Jerusalem School, is Professor Emeritus of Early Christianity and Judaism of the Second Temple Period at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is a member of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. In 1980 the State of Israel awarded him the Israel Prize in recognition of his scholarly achievements. Flusser’s many publications include *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (1988) and *Jesus* (1998).

Dwight A. Pryor is a founding member of the Jerusalem School, and was a member of the School’s first board of directors. In 1983 he established the Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, and currently serves as its president. Pryor resides in Dayton, Ohio, where he shares the pastoral responsibilities at Church of the Messiah. Much of his time is spent preaching and teaching in countries throughout the world.

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Note about Use of “B.C.E.” and “C.E.”

B.C.E. and C.E. are the abbreviations of “Before Common Era” and “Common Era,” respectively. B.C.E. and C.E. correspond to B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (*anno Domini*, in the year of our Lord) in Christian terminology. JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE uses B.C.E. and C.E. in articles authored by Jewish contributors.

Note about Hebrew Transliterations

The Hebrew letter *Het* represents a voiceless guttural produced by retracting the tongue root into the throat. English has no equivalent sound. To transliterate the *Het*, JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE uses an “H” that has been reduced in height (ָה).

CORRECTION

Please note the error on the JP 55 cover: “1998.” The issue date should have been April–June 1999. Indeed embarrassing, this typo was not our first, nor will it be our last. When publishing a periodical, one cannot escape making such mistakes. They serve as a good reminder that, like scribes copying manuscripts centuries ago, we, too, cannot offer the public a perfect text.